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T A L E S

OF THE

TWELFTH AND THIRTEENTH
CENTURIES.

F R O M

THE FRENCH OF MR. LE GRAND.

V O L. II.

Si honor apud te antiquitati & fabulis quoque.
PLINY.

L O N D O N:

Printed for Egerton, Hookham, Kearsley,
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MDGCLXXXVI.

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BY

THE FRENCH

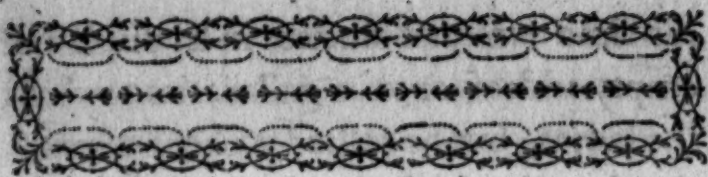


By Henry Jones, Esq., of the
British Museum.

L O N D O N

Printed for E. & J. Bland, Kings
Road, near the Strand.

MUSEUM



TALES, &c.

THE GREY PALFREY.

IN Champagne there lived in former days *Godfrey*, a brave Knight, rich in valuable endowments of body and mind, but poor in respect to property. Indebted chiefly to his valour for a subsistence, all his possessions consisted of a small estate, the rental of which was about two hundred livres; and the scantiness of his means was the more to be lamented, as in addition to his courage, he was a man of strict probity and honour. Whenever he appeared at a tournament,

his time was not wasted in a display of empty address or vain gallantries towards the ladies ; but he rushed without ostentation into the thickest of the throng, and never left the ground till he had unhorsed or subdued his opponents. These good qualities and rare accomplishments rendered his name famous and gained him consideration in every quarter.

In the neighbourhood of *Godfrey* then lived a very rich Lord. He was a widower ; and his marriage had produced him a very handsome daughter, called *Nina*. His mansion, as well as that of our Knight, was situated in the woods (for Champagne at that time abounded in forests still more than at the present hour) ; and they were little more than a league distant from each other. But that of the old Lord, built on a very steep declivity, was defended by a profound ditch and an impenetrable thorn hedge ; so that there was no access to it, but by the draw-bridge.

bridge. Such was the retirement of the veteran. He lived here in tranquility, with his daughter, making the most of his lands, which brought him an annual income of at least a thousand livres.

With such an inheritance and so much beauty, the young lady could not fail of having a numerous train of admirers. Of the number was *Godfrey*. Zealous to exert himself in the service of a mistress so distinguished for rank and merit, he strove earnestly to please her; and, in a short time, by means of his constant attentions and some brilliant feats of valour, he succeeded. But when the father perceived the Knight's visits became too frequent, he forbade his daughter speaking to him, and treated him with such coolness, that the favoured lover thought it imprudent to return.

Thus was all communication stopped between the two lovers. The father's age no longer permitted him to ride out: so there was no hope of an interview in his absence. Besides the old fox, having been himself a man of intrigue in his younger days, had learnt by experience to be mistrustful and guarded. Had *Godfrey* asked but for a sight of his mistress, even that feeble consideration had been denied him.

At last as he was one day roaming and searching about the walls, he discovered a neglected postern, through which he might speak to *Nina*. He found means to acquaint her of it, and she did not fail to take advantage of the information. It was easy for him to come to the place of rendezvous by narrow, unfrequented paths through the forest, known to him alone. This was at first some alleviation to the cruel separation of the two lovers; and for some time they enjoyed it with

with transport. But to converse without seeing each other, to love without the means of shewing it! Not to be allowed a single embrace! always to be in fear of being discovered, and ever to be separated! *Godfrey* could not endure his condition. He resolved then to get out of it by one bold attempt, and went to the Castle to declare his mind to the father, and to obtain of him a decisive answer.

"Sire, said he, I have a favour to request. Deign to listen to me for a moment. I love your daughter; my happiness entirely depends upon her; and I must venture to ask of you her hand. you know my name and birth; I flatter myself that I am entitled to your esteem, and not in every respect unworthy of *Nina*. I request your answer; which I shall consider as my sentence either of life or death."—"I am not surpris'd, answered the old gentleman, that any one should love my daughter. She is young,

handsome and discreet; her birth is distinguished; she is my sole heiress; and, if she continues to preserve my goodwill, she will at my decease be entitled to a considerable fortune. With all her commendations, I think no Lord in France need be ashamed to marry her. Many gentlemen have been here to solicit me on that subject: but I am in no haste; I shall wait a suitable match; and, above all, shall have nothing to do with those knights, who like their falcons, have nothing but what they catch to live on."

Godfrey was so confused that he could make no answer; but went to give utterance to his grief in the forest, and to wait till it should be time to repair to the *pavilion*. *Nina* was punctual to the appointed hour; and she came there only to join her grief to that of her lover. "Receive my last farewell, said the knight. I have done with this country; there is no longer any happiness or good in it; since I cannot

not possess you. Cursed be riches which ravish from me the only object of my love !”---“ Alas ! replied *Nina*, all the satisfaction I promised myself in the enjoyment of them, was in bestowing them on you ; and am I also condemned to curse them ! But, my *Godfrey*, let us not yet despair : we have still a resource, which love long since suggested to me. You have not far from hence, at *Medot*, an old uncle of about my father’s age. If he has a regard for you, as I cannot doubt, go and entrust him with the secret of your love. He has assuredly loved in his youth, and will have compassion for us. tell him that he may be the author of your happiness and mine : That all we require of him is a simulated service ; only to make a grant to you for a few days of a part of his estate, to the value of three hundred livres : and that he may then come and ask my father to grant you my hand. His friendship, I am sure, will obtain it ; and as soon as we are united in marriage,

marriage, we will resign what his bounty may induce him to make over to us."—

"I had given up all hope, said *Godfrey*; but you have restored me to life."

He went immediately to his uncle, whom he entreated to employ the interest he had with the young lady's father in his behalf, without, however, intimating that the attachment was mutual.

"Your choice is praiseworthy, said the uncle. I know your mistress; she is really enchanting. You may make yourself easy; for I will undertake to obtain her for you, and will this moment go to her father for that very purpose." In

effect, he then mounted his horse and rode to the old Lord's Castle. *Godfrey* on the other hand set out transported with joy, for *Galardon*, where a tournament was announced, that was to last for two days. During the whole journey, the amorous Knight could think on nothing but

but the happiness he was about to enjoy ; little imagining what a base project had been formed to betray him.

His uncle was as usual heartily welcomed at the father's. They sat down to table, and drinking to each other, began to relate their youthful exploits in love and arms. But when the tables were uncovered, and the servants had withdrawn, " My good old friend, said the Lord of *Medot*, I am a bachelor, and begin to be tired of a single life. You are going to marry your daughter, when you will also find the inconvenience of solitude. Hear a proposal that I have to make to you. Grant me *Nina* for a wife ; I will settle on her all my property, and will come and reside here with you for the remainder of my life." This proposal delighted the father. After embracing his old son-in-law, that was to be, he ordered in his daughter, to whom he announced the fatal agreement they had just made.

The

The consternation of the girl may be easily imagined. She returned to her chamber only to give vent to her tears, to imprecate a thousand curses on the perfidy of the uncle, and to call for succour on her unhappy lover. All this while, he was toiling to deserve her, by his glorious exploits at *Galardon*, and was far from conceiving his uncle to be capable of so base an action as to betray him, and to deprive him at once of his mistress and his inheritance. In the evening *Nina* ran to the postern gate, for she knew not that *Godfrey* was gone to the tournament; and having a long time waited for him in vain, she concluded that he had forsaken her.

The nuptials were appointed by the old gentleman to be celebrated the next day after the morrow; and the son-in-law had required that it should take place in his castle of *Medot*. It was consequently settled, that, in order to arrive there

there betimes, they should set out at break of day ; and in the mean while, the father and son-in-law sent into the neighbourhood to invite their friends, that is, all of their own age, who were still alive. The following day arrived, one after another, a number of old decrepid dotards, wrinkled, baldheaded and paralytic. Never was there such a burlesque of a bridal assemblage. You would have thought that it was a congregation of persons coming to take leave of each other at their departure for the other world.

The day was consumed in preparing the dress and ornaments for the unhappy bride. She was within ready to burst with grief, which she was however obliged to suppress, and to cover with the external appearance of chearful acquiescence. The father came occasionally to see how the work went on. In one of these visits, he was asked by somebody, whether

whether he had thought of ordering a sufficient number of horses to carry to Medot all the persons that were to go in the cavalcade. "The men, said he, have those on which they came. Those that are in my stables will serve; but at all events to obviate disappointment, let some be sent for and borrowed of my nearest neighbours." A servant was instantly dispatched with this commission.

The man recollected as he went, that *Godfrey* had a capital grey horse, reckoned one of the first in the province. The simpleton thought himself sure of gaining the good will of his mistress, if he could mount her so handsomely for the ceremony; and he accordingly went to the Knight's house to borrow it.

Godfrey after obtaining the prize at the tournament, had gone to his uncle's, to know the success of his application; but not finding him at home, he imagined that

that the old gentleman was detained by some difficulty started by the father; and returned home; in other respects so easy in his mind, and so full of confidence in the promise of his negociator, that in coming into his house he ordered a minstrel to be brought to amuse him with some love songs. He flattered himself that his uncle would take a pleasure in coming personally to announce his good fortune; and in this fond expectation his eyes were continually directed towards the gate.

Suddenly he perceives one coming. This was the servant, who saluting the Knight, asked him, in the name of his master, for the loan of his fine grey palfrey, for the morrow. "Oh! with all my heart," answered *Godfrey*; and for a longer time, if he wants it. "But what occasion has he for the horse?"—"Sir, it is to carry my lady *Nina* to *Medot*."—"Your lady! and what is she going to do at
 Vol. II. C Medot?"—

Medot?"—"To be married. Why, don't you know that your uncle has demanded her hand of my Lord, and that they are to be married to-morrow morning?"

At these words the Knight was petrified with astonishment. He could not at first believe so black a treachery, and made the servant a second time assure him of the truth. Unfortunately for him, the offenders were beyond the reach of his vengeance. He walked about for some time in silence, with his eyes cast towards the ground and full of fury. At length he stopped on a sudden; called his squire, ordered him to saddle the grey horse, and deliver it to the servant. "She shall mount it, said he to himself; and in mounting it she will at least bestow another thought on me. And shall not I be happy to contribute to her pleasure? But no! I accuse her falsely. They have certainly constrained her; and she is no

less

less to be pitied than myself. It is I who have her heart ; and whilst I live mine is devoted to her."

The Knight then called all his people ; distributed among them the little money he had, and told them that they were that instant at liberty to quit his service. They in the utmost agitation intreated him to let them know in what particular they had been so unfortunate as to incur his displeasure. " I am entirely satisfied with you all, answered he ; and I wish it were in my power to make you a better recompence for your services : but life is now a burthen to me ; farewell, be gone and let me die !" The poor servants threw themselves in tears at his feet ; and implored him to suffer them at least to remain with him, to alleviate his misfortunes. He left them without an answer, and went to shut himself up in his chamber.

By this time they were at rest in the father's castle. In order to rise betimes, they had gone soon to bed, and the watch had orders to ring the alarm bell at break of day. *Nina* alone could not enjoy repose. The moment that was to begin her misery approached; and she found herself now without resource. Twenty times in the course of the day had the unfortunate maid sought the means of escaping. No danger would have deterred her, had it been possible to make the attempt; but she had too many eyes to deceive; she had, therefore no remedy but patient resignation, no consolation but her tears.

Towards midnight the moon arose. The sentinel, who had been carousing a little over night, and had in consequence fallen a sleep, awaking suddenly, and seeing a very great light, thought the day was considerably advanced, and hastened to give the signal with the alarm bell.

bell. All immediately began to rise, and the servants to saddle the horses. The Grey Palfrey, as the handsomest, was destined for the young lady. At the sight of it, she could not dissemble her grief, but burst into tears. They did not pay much attention to the circumstance, attributing her affliction to the regret she felt at leaving her father's house. But when the time came for her to mount the horse, she absolutely refused; and they were obliged by force to place her upon the saddle. At last they set out. First marched the servants, male and female; then the gentry who were to be present at the nuptials; and after them the bride, who in no haste to get to her journey's end, kept in the rear of the cavalcade. She was entrusted to the care of an old knight; a man of prudence and good repute, who was to be her godfather at the nuptials. He closed the procession.

To arrive at Medot, they had three leagues to go through the forest, by a cross road so narrow, that two horses could with difficulty walk abreast. This obliged them to make a long file. For the first half league they chattered and jogged on pleasantly enough; but the old people, who had not taken their usual rest, soon were overpowered by sleep. You would have laughed to see their hoary heads bobbing from one side to another, and dropping forward on the necks of their horses.

The bride followed, too much overwhelmed with sorrow, to observe them. Like a criminal led to execution, who by every trifling pretext for delay strives to spin out a few moments of existence, she checked now and then the progress of her horse. Thus they had not proceeded a league before she was, without intending it, separated from the rest of the cavalcade. Her old guide was no more aware
of

of it than his god-daughter, as he took an opportunity of finishing his nap like the others. Nevertheless, he sometimes half opened his eyes ; but as he always saw the Grey Palfrey before him, they quickly closed again as it were by instinct. As for the horses, they had no occasion for the guidance of their riders ; in such a road they could not lose themselves.

There was, however, a spot where the road branched out into two tracks. The one was a continuation of that to Medot, the other a bye-road to *Godfrey's*. All the horsemen in the troop of course proceeded in the first of these ; and the old godfather's beast followed the track of the rest. As for the Grey Palfrey, since he had of late carried his master from the postern gate, he had been so accustomed to the other path, that he naturally pursued it.

Before

Before one could get from that place to *Godfrey's* it was necessary to ford a small rivulet. At the noise made by the horse in stepping into the water, *Nina* is roused from her melancholy reverie. She calls her godfather to her assistance, but sees nobody. Finding herself alone in a forest at such a deadly hour, she at first shivered with an emotion of terror; but the idea of escaping the evil, with which she was threatened, soon overpowered her fear, and she pushed the horse boldly into the river, resolved rather to perish than bear the consummation of these hateful nuptials. But there was nothing to apprehend. The horse according to his usual custom, crossed the ford, and soon arrived in safety at his master's house.

As soon as the sentinel perceived the Lady, he sounded his horn to give the alarm, and then came himself to ask, through the wicket of the draw-bridge, what was her pleasure. "Open the
gate

gate quickly, said the damsel, and give refuge to a woman, who is pursued by robbers." She made this pretence to move him. The man looks through the wicket; he sees a young lady of a very handsome mein, and covered with a rich scarlet mantle. The dress, the beauty of the damsel, the grey horse that she rides, which appears to him his master's Palfrey, astonish him so as to make him believe it was some friendly fairy, whom compassion at his master's sorrow had brought to comfort him. He runs immediately to inform him of this extraordinary incident.

Godfrey had passed the night in the most heart-rending anguish: but when he heard a lady was at his gate, he went instantly through courtesy to receive her, and let down the draw-bridge. What unexpected joy, what unlooked for happiness to behold his mistress! She rushed into his arms, crying out to him, to save her, and at the same time, looking back with

with terror, as if she had really been pursued by ravishers. " Compose yourself said he, and have courage; I hold you secure in my arms, and from this moment no power on earth shall tear you from me." He then called his people, to whom he gave their several orders, and raised the drawbridge. But that was not all: To secure and improve this unexpected good fortune, he judged it necessary immediately to espouse *Nina*; and and for that purpose having sent for his Chaplain, he conducted her to the altar. Hilarity then resumed the place of melancholy in the Castle. Master and servants, all were equally intoxicated with joy; never did transport so rapidly succeed despair.

It was far otherwise at Medot. All had arrived there, except the damsel and her guardian. In vain were they enquired for; no one knew how they were separated, nor what had happened to detain them.

them. The godfather at length appeared, still nodding upon his horse; and was greatly astonished, when they awaked him, at missing his ward. As it was conjectured that she must have lost her way in the forest, several of the servants were sent in pursuit of her. But all their doubts and apprehensions were soon cleared up, by the presence of a messenger from *Godfrey*, who announced the safe arrival of the lady at his master's castle, and in his name invited thither the uncle and all the company that was to be present at the marriage. They accordingly repaired with expedition to the castle of *Godfrey*, who met them at his gate, holding by the hand his new spouse; and he presented her to them under that title.

This at first excited a loud murmur throughout the troop. But when *Godfrey* had intreated their attention, and related to them all the circumstances of his amour up to the adventure of the Palfrey,
the

the scene was entirely changed. Those veterans, grown grey in the principles of honour and fidelity, betrayed even their indignation at being made the accomplices of so base a perfidy; and they all went in a body to press the father to ratify the union of the two lovers. The old Lord found it impossible to withhold his assent; and the nuptials were celebrated at *Godfrey's*. The uncle died within the year, and the Knight succeeded to the inheritance of Medot. Soon after his father-in-law also died; when he became one of the richest Lords in *Champagne*, and lived with his wife happy and respected.

THE SCARLET ROBE.

A KNIGHT of the county of *Dam-*
martin, a man of repute in his
 neighbourhood, had chosen for his mis-
 tress a very agreeable and pretty woman,
 married to a rich Lord of a district about
 two leagues distant. Anxious to acquire
 the esteem and affections of the lady, our
 Knight omitted no opportunity of court-
 ing honour, and gaining fresh laurels;
 indeed throughout the whole country,
 there was not to be found a more va-
 liant Cavalier. The Lord *, on the con-

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D

trary

* In the original he is called a *Vavasseur*, or
 one that held an *arriere-fief*, that is to say, one who
 held of a Lord who was also the vassal of another.
 Besides those Knights, who from the nature of
 their tenures were obliged to attend the Courts of
 their liege-lords, there were others, who in the
 courts of justice of the Sovereign, or of the great
 Barons, took upon themselves by choice the func-
 tion of Judges. They were called *Chevaliers*
Lettres, *Chevaliers de justice*, or *Chevaliers-ès-loix*.

trary, was fond of the bench, and was never happy but when haranging in Court, or giving judgment in a law-suit.

One day in July, he was obliged to go and attend the pleadings at *Senlis*. The lady immediately sent a private message to her lover, acquainting him with the departure of her husband, and appointing an assignation at her house that night. The Knight, whose love was no less respectable than ardent, and who knew the decorum proper to be observed in such a meeting, put on his best gilt spurs, his fine scarlet cloak; and dressed like a young bachelor, the terror of lovers, he set out on his high palfrey*, taking with him

* The success of a Knight in the lists depended in a great measure on the size of his horse; and they had for those occasions large, strong horses, called *Dextriers*. (Hence the expression, *he is upon his high horse*.) Those, which the Knights used to travel with were called *Palfreys*; tho' in fact

him a sparrow-hawk and a couple^l of dogs, that he might be provided for sport, in case he should fall in with any birds upon the road. All the people were asleep at the castle, when he arrived. He therefore fastened up his horse, placed a perching-stick for his bird, and went quietly to the lady's chamber * * * * *

At break of day the husband returned. The pleadings were put off to the following week at Senlis, and he came home to go to bed. But how was he astonished on entering the court to see a horse, dogs and a hawk! He suspected that there was somebody with his wife, and ran up hastily to know the truth of it. The Knight was lucky enough to hear him coming; and, snatching such of his cloaths as he could lay his hands upon, sculked down by the further side of the
D 2 bed,

fact they are often confounded. A Knight never mounted a mare; this would have been letting himself down, and appearing as one degraded,

bed, and lay upon the floor at full length. The wife to conceal him, threw over him her cloak and petticoat ; but he had been in so great a hurry to hide himself, that he had not time to find his robe : it lay upon a trunk near the bed, and was the first object that met the eyes of the husband.

“ Madam,” he exclaimed sternly, “ what is the meaning of all this ? I just saw below a horse and dogs ; and here is a robe ; who is it has been here in my absence ? ” — “ Sir,” said she, without being in the smallest degree disconcerted, “ it is a present that has been just made you. But, have you not seen my brother ? I am surpris’d that you did not meet him ; for he is but this moment gone. He came yesterday in this fine robe. I, in perfect simplicity and without any design whatever, just happened to remark in conversation, that it would become you. I wished him to try it, answered he immediately ;

diately ; and pulling it off, begged that I would present it to you : at the same time, to make his gift worth your acceptance, he insisted upon adding to it his gilt spurs, his dogs, his hawk, and his favourite horse. You may easily conceive the answer I made to so generous an offer : but it was in vain that I declined it again and again ; he would listen to no refusal, but has left them all, as you see, behind him. Receive then the donation, since you cannot send it away without offending him. You may without difficulty soon find something to present him with in return, that will acquit you of the obligation."

This fiction succeeded to a wonder. The husband, somewhat avaricious in his disposition, was delighted with the present. But he was almost ashamed to take the robe, and wished it had been omitted in the gift ; he was apprehensive of being charged with want of delicacy.

“Not at all, Sir; your acceptance of it will be attributed to frankness and good nature. Nothing should be rejected from a friend; for my own part, whenever I observe any one shy of receiving, I immediately set him down for one who is equally averse from giving.”—By these and other like arguments, she brought him to acknowledge her in the right, and to promise that he would keep the whole. At last he lay down; and it is more difficult to say than to conceive how cordially he was received, how he was caressed, and what pains were taken to lull him to sleep. But no sooner did he begin to snore, than the wife pushed the gallant gently with her foot to give him notice of it. He then crept softly for his robe, and going away mounted his horse, and returned home with his dog and his bird.

Towards noon the husband awoke, and the first thing he thought of, was to en-
quire

quire for his fine robe. His valet, who the day before had been in the fields to superintend the reapers, knew not what he asked for, and brought him a green one which he used to wear. "No, no; it is not that I want; it is the fine scarlet robe, that was given to me yesterday." His wife looking upon him with an air of astonishment, asked him if he had bought or borrowed one at Senlis. "No, madam, I tell you again it is that your brother gave me. But you ought to know better than I; for this morning on my arrival, when I found it on this trunk, you said it was a present that he made me."—"My brother, Sir! It is more than four months since I saw him. You have certainly been dreaming; for even if he had been here, as you insinuate, he would not have behaved like a man drunk or mad, in offering you his robes. He might act in that manner towards minstrels, or fiddlers, or those vagabonds, who go about singing to entertain us.

Your

Your estate brings you more than eighty livres * a year; surely that is enough to satisfy all your wishes. Buy yourself a horse as handsome and as valuable as you please, treat yourself with cloaths to your fancy; you can well afford it; but remember you are not to wear those of other people."---"How's this? why, but this very morning it was through your persuasion I agreed to accept it. If I was to believe you, I could not refuse it without offending your brother and giving him uneasiness. And now truly I disgrace myself: which am I to believe?"---"Who, I Sir?"

* The author, to account for this sum constituting a large estate, and giving the possessor the title of a *rich man*, presents us in a note, with instances of the extreme difference in the value of money between those times and the present. He further informs us, that from an alteration of the currency, a livre was then eighteen times its present weight and intrinsic value; so that his eighty livres were in reality 1400; which in that age must have been a very great annual income.

I, Sir? I talk to you in that manner? That I should tell you that my brother had spoke to me when I had not seen him? Indeed, if I did not know that you had been sleeping, this language would give me a vast deal of pain. I should be apprehensive that your brain was affected. But I suspect you are not in earnest. Come, tell me truly, do you really believe you saw a robe on this trunk?"—"Yes, most undoubtedly; it was there; I saw it as plainly as I see you at this moment."—"Ah, my dear, you alarm me. I'll engage some accident happened to you on the road, that you do not think proper to inform me of. Look at me; ha, yes indeed; it is as I apprehended; your eyes are jaundiced, you have symptoms of a fever. You are certainly not in sound health. Take my advice; lie down again; and since it has pleased God that your memory should be affected, commend yourself to our lady, or to some good saint in heaven, that it may be restored.

stowed to you. Make a vow to go and visit the church of the Baron St. James. you may return by that of the Lord St. Arnold : Some time since, if you had been ruled by me, you would have promised this last a large wax candle as big round as your body-----."

Although these expressions had some effect on the mind of the husband, yet he could not divest himself of the idea, that he had seen a robe on the trunk ; and he sent for all his servants to interrogate them on the subject. But not one of them, as I before stated, had seen the Knight ; and even if they had been privy to the whole affair, they would have been careful how they ventured to contradict their mistress. The husband then was induced, upon the whole, to think his senses were disturbed ; and seemingly alarmed at what had happened, vowed a pilgrimage to St. James's church ; and in consequence set out upon it three days after.

Gentlemen,

Gentlemen, husbands! this story is intended for your admonition. I warn you not to trust the evidence of your own eyes; but if you mean to do well, and to pass quietly through life, you must believe only what your wives tell you.

THE BUTCHER OF ABBEVILLE.

MILES, a butcher of *Abbeville*, being benighted on his return from the market of *Oisemont* and obliged to stop in the road at *Bailleul*, enquired of an old woman, whom he met, whether there was in the village any inn or house, in which he could be accommodated with a night's lodging. "There is one," answered the good woman, "but it will afford you but indifferent fare. I would rather advise you to apply to *Sire Gautier*, our parson. He is the only one in the village that keeps good wine; and to my knowledge he has lately received two casks from *Noyentel*.

Miles followed the advice of the old woman, and went to knock at the door of the pastor. This last was a man of an austere and brutal temper. Without opening the door, or so much as putting his

his head out of the window, he called out from the further extremity of the room, to know what our traveller wanted. The butcher told him he was a poor man, who had been travelling on foot all day, and, being afraid of robbers, wanted to beg shelter for the night. The priest made him a short answer, that his house was not intended for the reception of clodhoppers. Surprised to hear such language from a divine, the butcher expostulated; represented that he was a man, no less than the noblest Knight in France, and, moreover, offered to pay any reasonable price for his lodging. All the reply he could get was to *go to the devil*.

As he went away, fully resolved to be revenged on the parson, if ever he could find an opportunity, he perceived a flock of sheep approaching him, and enquired to whom they belonged. "Sir," said the shepherd, "they are the property of parson *Gautier*." Miles overjoyed at this

discovery, went and placed himself behind a hedge; and, as the sheep were filing off, one after another, he singled out the finest and best conditioned, and clandestinely carried it off. A few minutes after, he went again and knocked at the parson's door. Being asked his business and who he was, he answered that he was a butcher from *Abbeville*, and was bringing a fat sheep from the market of *Oisemont*, which he would gladly give for a supper. This obtained him a very hearty welcome. He then made the parson observe the fine condition of the animal, and declared that for his part, he would be satisfied with the skin. After going himself and cutting it up in the kitchen, he returned, while the servant was dressing part of it, to chat with the parson.

His reverence kept a mistress, whom he always shut up in her chamber on the appearance of a stranger; and this was

one reason for refusing at first to open the door to the butcher. But the present of the mutton put him in such good humour that he desired the girl to come down and partake of the supper. The evening was spent in great mirth and festivity. On breaking up from table, *Gautier* went up stairs with his lady, and desired the maid servant to shew *Miles* into the room, that was intended for him, and to observe that he wanted nothing. *Miles*, however, settled matters with the maid so as not to be obliged to lie alone; what engaged her to be so complaisant was a promise of the sheep's skin.

The next morning whilst the pastor was gone to say mass, the butcher went up to the lady's chamber, on pretence of taking leave and thanking her for her civilities. She had not yet risen out of bed. *Miles* drawing aside the cloaths a little, expressed his rapture at her charms, again made the offer of the sheep's skin, and

got for the same reward the favour he had before obtained from the maid-servant. After this he repaired to the church to find *Gautier*, and made a proposal to him of selling the skin, which he said would incommode him on his journey, for a third less than it was worth. The bargain was instantly struck; *Gautier* gave him the price in ready money, and begged to be favoured with another visit, the next time he should pass through *Bailleul*.

Meanwhile the parson's mistress had no sooner acquired her right to the sheep's skin, than she came down stairs to take possession. The maid, whose pretensions were the same, also laid claim to it: and this gave rise to a desperate quarrel, which began with mutual abuse and terminated in blows and pulling caps. *Gautier*, coming in, was obliged to interpose and to separate the combatants. He enquired into the cause of their dispute; and then beginning to have
some

some insight into what had happened, he threatened to turn them both out of doors.

Just at that moment came the shepherd, with a bewildered look, to tell his master, that one of the sheep was missing, without it being possible for him to account for the loss; unless it was stolen by a fellow, who accosted him the night before, as he was driving the flock into fold. *Gautier* desired him to describe the man; and found it was no other than his butcher. He then produced the hide of the sheep, which the shepherd perfectly recollected. The whole affair was then cleared up; and it was found that *Miles*, after having been lodged and feasted by the Parson, after having amused himself with the two girls, was not content, but had even contrived to get payment for his trouble.

THE PARSON'S COW.

A COUNTRYMAN on the day of the annunciation went with his wife to church. The parson, who was called Master *Constant*, before he began divine service addressed an homily to his parishioners, in which he vehemently exhorted them to charity; among other arguments in favour of giving for the sake of God, stating the return that would be made; for God, said he, always repays two fold.

This reasoning had its effect upon the countryman. "Wife," said he on leaving the church, "did you attend to what our priest has just been saying? Since God pays with such good interest, I have a mind to give away our cow for his sake. Besides she does not afford us much milk. What think you?"—"You will do well," answered the wife, "if it be to get something more in return."

The

The villager, in consequence of this determination, went to loosen his cow, and conducted her to the parson, whom he entreated with uplifted hands to accept the gift. "It is the only one I have," said he; "I offer it to you in the name of God." At the same time, he put into the Priests hand the halter of the beast. *Constant* applauded vastly this conduct of his parishoner; and heartily wished that his discourse had operated so happily on the rest.

When the countryman was gone, the Parson ordered his clerk to take the cow he had just gotten, to the stable, and to tie its horns with those of his own, that they might be used to each other. The clerk obeyed the order and then returned. The parson's cow continued feeding very peaceably, but the other, frightened at her associate, or not liking the situation she was in, began to draw aside and to endeavour at getting away. By repeated tugs

tugs she at last drew her companion out of the cow-house; and thence from meadow to meadow, and from field to field, till she dragged her to the door of her own stable. The countryman, who saw them arrive together, called out his wife to be a witness of the miracle. They then congratulated themselves on having given their cow to God, and agreed that the Parson was right in saying, that he repaid twofold. Nevertheless, their stable being too small to contain both the beasts, they resolved without delay to get rid of the new comer, and the countryman instantly led it to market.

A U B E R R E A.

A CITIZEN of *Compiègne*, a man of respectability and in affluent circumstances, had a son much addicted to expence and irregular pleasures. Their house was contiguous to that of a poor man, who had nothing to boast of but a very pretty daughter. The young libertine, being struck with the beauty of the girl, cultivated an intimacy with his neighbour in hopes of entrapping the daughter. He courted and made love to her for a long time ; but she did not want prudence, and always replied to his solicitations : “ Sir, I shall never love any one but my husband ; it depends upon yourself whether you will purchase my affections upon those terms ; you have my entire concurrence, and I declare to you, that I should prefer you to all others.” The amorous youth wished nothing more ardently ; but he was apprehensive that
his

his father would not consent; and that apprehension was well founded. The old man, indeed, judging the match ineligible, commanded his son not to think of it.

In this situation of affairs, a merchant of the town, who by the death of his wife, had become a widower, came to solicit the girl's hand; and soon after married her. I leave you to conceive the chagrin of the young citizen on the occasion. He complained; he wept; endeavoured by all means to circumvent the marriage; cursed his father's fortune; but at last, when he found it was impossible to prevent it, he consoled himself as well as he could under the disappointment, and thought of nothing further than obtaining from the matron what he had before sought from the maid. He accordingly dressed himself in the gayest manner, and went to pay a visit to the newly married lady. But she received

ceived him so ill, and desired him in so discouraging a manner not to come again to her house, that he gave up all hopes of attaining his object.

Vexed at the reception he had met with, and agitated with disappointed passion, he went to compose himself in a neighbouring house that belonged to an old mantua-maker of his acquaintance, whose name was *Auberea*. She, observing him pale and trembling, asked him what was the matter? He, in a manner, related to the old woman the particulars of his amour, and declared that he could not live without the possession of his charming mistress.

Now this *Auberea* at an intrigue was the most notable woman in existence. There was no man, however sagacious, that she could not lead with a string, if she once attempted it. "What," said she to the youth, "does so trifling a matter
make

make you miserable? My poor amorous friend take courage. I'll engage that you shall soon have a private meeting with her; and her own jealous husband shall be the very person to procure you that satisfaction. But what will you give me?" The lover, in his transport at this assurance promised fifty livres. "Go and bring them" replied *Auberea*. He went accordingly. "Now give me your great coat," added she, "and retire; but keep yourself in readiness this night and the next, in case I should have to call you."

Her plans all arranged and settled in her head, *Auberea* watched from her window, to see when the merchant should go out upon his business. No sooner did she perceive him clear of the threshold of his door than she put on her short mantle, rolled up the youth's great coat, put it in the form of a bundle under her arm, and thus went to wait upon the newly married lady. "God be with you, cried she, my
beauteous

beauteous dame, and may he have mercy
 on the poor lady who is dead and gone.
 What a good-hearted creature it was!
 she was the idol of all in this part of the
 city. I could not pass by her door, but
 she would cry out "come in, Dame Au-
 berea, walk in then I say." Then would
 she offer me a chair, and make me chat
 with her. If ever I wanted any thing I
 came at once to ask for it. It was all the
 same; she would have given me any
 thing, even to her heart's blood. Ah!
 I have met with a great loss in her."
 "Don't weep on that account, neigh-
 bour," answered the wife. "What is it you
 are in want of? Tell me."—"I ask par-
 don for the liberty I take, my good lady;
 but since you are so kind, I must inform
 you that you have it in your power to re-
 store life to me. For some time my daugh-
 ter has been ill. She has heard talk of
 your nice white wine and your small
 cakes; and it is now two days that she
 has been plaguing me to procure some

for her. I have till this moment always declined coming, because I am not accustomed to trouble those with whom I am not acquainted. But what is not one capable of doing for a child? You will be sensible of that yourself some future day, as well as me, my gentle neighbour.”

“ You were to blame in not coming before, Dame *Auberea*. There is nothing that my husband and I would not have gladly spared for the relief of your daughter. But sit you down.”—“ How truly you deserve all manner of happiness,” said *Auberea*, seating herself; “and I shall pray to god to grant it to you ever! Indeed my deceased lady had every reason to be happy in her husband. He refused her nothing, money, dress or trinkets. I who now tell it you, knew all those circumstances well. For instance, thereabouts stood her bed.”—

In saying these words, *Auberea* enters further into the house. She inspects the apartments, examines the furniture, and desires

desires to see the lady's wardrobe. A young married woman in such a case seldom requires much pressing. She displays all her habits before the old woman; then desires her to look at the bed. "There," said she, "is where my husband, and I sleep." This was all *Auberea* wanted. In feeling the bed, to examine its quality, she thrusts in, with great dexterity, and without being perceived, the rolled up bundle which she had kept concealed under her mantle. They chat and gossip together for some little time longer. At last the mantua-maker pretended, to recollect herself, and to consider that her daughter would be impatient at her long absence. They gave her a bottle of wine, a roll and a cake, with which she departed.

At night the husband returned, after having run about from place to place on his business; and being fatigued, he ordered supper immediately, that he might

go to bed betimes. But scarcely had he got into bed, before he felt something under his side, that incommoded him. He raised himself up and groped, till he drew out the old woman's bundle. He turned pale at the sight. A dagger plunged into his breast that moment would hardly have forced out a drop of blood. He bolted the door to have leisure fully to examine the bundle, and finds it to be a man's great coat. "I am betrayed, then exclaimed he in a piteous tone! She loves another and married me only for convenience!" He threw himself in an agony of grief upon the bed. A moment after he rises up and strides about distractedly; then he stops short, to consider what measures are proper to be taken. But the more he reflects, the more he is puzzled. A thousand ideas, rising in desperation one above another, assail at once his troubled soul. At length his fury increased to such a degree, that he goes down stairs, seizes

seizes his wife by the arm, and turns her out of the house, after loading her with reproaches.

She is astonished to find herself at once, without having had time to say a word in her defence, at midnight in the midst of the street. She has not power to move a step, so great is her amazement. *Auberea*, who had foreseen what would probably happen, was upon the watch to wait the issue. She runs up to the wife, " what, is it you, my good lady? What are you seeking in the streets at this late hour? Has any accident happened?" — " Oh! my good friend, *Auberea*, how fortunate I am to meet you! and yet what a sad unaccountable misfortune has brought me here! My husband just now came in a rage, and drove me out, I know not wherefore. I am almost distracted. For God's sake, do me the favour to bear me company to my father's house." " Have a care, what

are you about?" replied the cunning old strumpet; "it would be known in the town, and your adventure would make a fine piece of public scandal. Besides, would you expose yourself to a bitter reprimand? That you may be sure is all you would get from your father. He would suppose you had been detected in an intrigue, and would send you back to your husband. Take my word for it, this must be the effect of liquor; come to my house while your husband sleeps off his debauch. To-morrow, when his head is in order, we will return together, and you will find he will not be sensible of what he has now been doing.—As you have obliged me, it is but just that I should serve you in return."

Without waiting for an answer, *Auberea* then took the dame, and conducted her to an inner chamber of her house. "Now said she, you are in perfect safety; recover yourself, while I go and provide something

thing for your supper."—" Oh! no," answered the other, " I am choaked with anguish; it is impossible for me to swallow a morsel." *Auberea* finding that her guest would take no refreshment, advised her at last to lie down. She at first refused; but at last by force of argument and importunity, she was persuaded to undress herself and go to bed.

Scarcely was she disposed of there, before the old woman had run to acquaint her young gallant with the incident. after the hopes that had been given him, he thought as one may suppose, but little of sleep; but continued sitting in expectation at the window. " What news," cried he?—" Very good. The bird is caught." He then leaps down the stairs, four at a time, and hastens to *Auberea's* house.-----

What follows is but too easily conceived. The wife at first resists and threatens to alarm the

the neighbourhood: the young lover represents to her, that if any should come and find her there, it would be a difficult matter to convince them of her innocence. He takes the advantage of the surprize and trouble she is in. The new Lucretia yields; but less severe than the other, she at last forgives and embraces her subduer.

In the morning, when the bell rung for matines at the Abbey of St. Corneille, *Auberea* entered the chamber of the two lovers. "Arise, said she to the young citizen, and leave this place."—"And why go out so soon? It is not yet broad day-light."—"Come obey me, without hesitation, if you wish that I should again do you a service. And you, lady, must now think of returning to your husband; it is my business to manage it; dress yourself and come along with me."

Auberea then went out with the young wife, whom she conducted to the church
of

of the Abbey. There, placing her on her knees in a corner, and lighting a wax taper near her, she put into her hands a large book, and desired her to continue in that posture, till she should return. The old woman then ran to the husband. He had passed the whole night in walking up and down his room, and reflecting on the mishap, which had given him so much trouble. He repented, however, having turned out his wife, and was continually listening, in hopes to hear her return. He no sooner heard a knock, than he ran in haste to the door, and saw *Auberea*; who told him that having had that night a terrible dream, and going to the Abbey to pray to god that he would avert the evil that threatened her, she there was surpris'd to find his wife in tears. "You must have very little feeling, said she, to send to church at so early an hour a young creature so amiable and so pretty, whom you should rather oblige to lie in bed till the day was a little

tle

tle advanced, for the benefit of her health."—" At the church," cried the husband with astonishment, and at the same time, not without satisfaction! " Dame *Auberea*, you surely are not in earnest?"—" Yes, Sir, she really is at church; and if you will not believe me, come there and satisfy your own eyes."

He went with her and found his wife in the posture in which *Auberea* had placed her, seeming to pray with great devotion. This edifying sight brought so sudden a calm within his breast, that he took her by the hand, and after apologizing to her, by the avowal that he had the night before drunk rather too freely, he took her home along with him. Nevertheless, the circumstance of the great-coat, filled his mind with doubts which he could not solve, and with an uneasiness of which he could not get the better: and the whole morning he could not help thinking and puzzling himself about it.

That

That was the only point on which it remained for *Auberea* to triumph over the husband. She placed herself in the manner she had done the day before, at her window to watch when he went out ; No sooner did she see him make his appearance in the street, than she began to cry out in the most distressed tone : "thirty pence, oh, Christ ! thirty pence ! I shall never recover it." In saying these words, she struck her breast, and wept as if her heart was breaking.

At her cries, the merchant stopped to know the cause of her affliction. The cunning old baggage, without seeming to see him, and as one distracted, kept crying : "Thirty-pence, good God ! where am I to find them ? I am ruined ; they will soon come and seize upon my effects ; ah, this was the mischief my dream foretold me !"

These

These lamentations, which had the appearance of sincerity, excited the compassion and the curiosity of the merchant. He went into the house and pulling *Auberea* by the sleeve, asked her again what it was that so grievously affected her. "Sir," said she, "hear if I have not substantial cause for grief. Yesterday a young man brought me a great coat; some of the furred border required stitching, and I was to return it to him this morning. I immediately began to work at it; but having occasion to go out, I took it with me, that I might not lose time or disappoint the owner; and I have been so unlucky as to leave it in some place or other; but where I cannot possibly guess. The youth to whom it belonged, has just been with me to demand it; and as I could not return it to him, he has threatened to prosecute me, unless I paid him thirty pence, at which he values it.—Thirty pence! neighbour. Think what a sum that is for me to raise.

Alas,

Alas, if I cannot find the coat, it will be best for me to go at once and drown myself in the river." "Tell me, good *Aubereca*," replied the merchant, "were you not yesterday at my house?"—"Yes, Sir, at the time your wife was making her bed; and by the same token, that she made me sit down by the bed-side and chat with her for a few minutes. The great-coat was a green one, and trimmed with squirrel-skin. It may be further known by a seam just begun, and by my needle and thimble, which will be found in it."

Never did joy equal what the merchant felt on hearing this intelligence. He fully recollected that the great-coat was green and trimmed with fur: and all that remained to make him the happiest man on the earth, was the evidence of the needle and thimble. This he immediately went to verify, and it completed his conviction of the wife's innocence.

cence. Thus all four were rendered happy ; but which was most so I leave you to conjecture.

The author finishes with the reflection, that seldom a woman will commit a fault unless instigated by another ; and that one of the strictest prudence, purity and virtue, may quickly loose those good qualities by falling in company with a female friend or neighbour.

B E R A N G E R.

IN *Lombardy*, a country that has not been remarkable for the valour of its inhabitants, there lived a knight, a widower with an only daughter. He had contracted debts, and was obliged to have recourse to an usurer; but this temporary shift, as it generally happens, only served to plunge him the deeper into difficulties: so that in a short time, being unable to satisfy his creditor in any other manner, he was obliged to compound matters by offering his daughter in marriage to the son. The offer was excepted, and the damsel espoused the son of the usurer. It is thus that the noblest race is destroyed, that chivalry degenerates, and that brave men are succeeded by a generation of reptiles who have no passion but for gold and silver.

The old gentleman was himself ashamed of this alliance, and was mortified in his soul that he had cast a blot upon the birth of his grand-children. He created, however, his son-in-law a Knight, and armed him with his own hand.* Puffed up with his new title, our young plebian thought himself elevated into a hero. His nobility was the constant theme of his conversation, and villeins of his mockery. All he would listen to, especially at table, was tournaments, arms and combats. He hoped by that to give his wife a great opinion of him; but he found that it only subjected him

* One of the privileges of a Knight, and that to which is principally to be ascribed the degradation of Chivalry, was the power of conferring the same dignity upon another. But a person of ignoble birth, who was knighted in this private manner, durst not make his appearance in that character at a tournament, or in a public assembly; and even those of noble birth were obliged to have their creation confirmed by the sovereign.

him the more to her contempt. To impose on her then in a manner somewhat more specious, he declared that, ashamed to have suffered love to chain down his valour, he was resolved at length to shew her what a husband she had got, and engaged that if he could shortly fall in with an adversary, he would give proofs of such prowess, as all her ancestors combined together would have been unable to exhibit.

The next day he arose early ; sent for arms quite new and shining with extraordinary lustre ; then mounted a shewy charger and sallied forth courageously. The only difficulty was to determine whither he should bend his course thus equipped ; and by what means he should continue to acquire with his rib the reputation of a gallant Knight. Not far distant there fortunately was a wood. Thither he repairs with full speed ; ties up his horse, and looking round to see

that he was observed by nobody, he hangs his shield on the trunk of a tree, and with all his force begins to exercise his sword upon it. He likewise shivers his lance to pieces against the tree : after which he returns home, with his shield, all hacked and cut, suspended from his neck *.

His wife, as he dismounted from his horse, came to hold the stirrups. He commanded her to retire, and displaying his shattered arms, the pretended evidence of his combat, observed, with an air of contempt, that the whole family from which she was so vain of deducing her origin, could not, together united, have born the dreadful assault which he had just sustained. She made no answer, but went in again, not a little surprised, and however,

* This was the manner in which the Knights carried their shields in travelling, when they had no squire to attend them.

however, to see his shield battered as if he had been at a tournament, whilst neither Knight nor horse had received a scratch.

The following week our hero sallied out again, and with the same success. He had even the insolence, on this last occasion, when the wife came on his return to assist him in getting off his horse, to put her from him rudely with his foot, as if she were not fit to touch a man of his extraordinary merit. The horse, notwithstanding, had come back as fresh as when he set out; the sword, which was hacked like a saw, did not shew the least trace of blood, and neither the helmet nor the coat of mail appeared to have received a single blow. All these circumstances excited a degree of mistrust in the wife. She strongly suspected the truth of these terrible combats; and to know with certainty what to think of it, she in secret provided herself with the arms
of

of a Knight, and resolved to follow her husband the next time he went out, and, if possible to retaliate by some kind of artifice.

He soon returned to the wood, to dispatch, as he gave out, three knights who had dared to provoke him to combat. The wife pressed him to take some Squires armed along with him, if it were only to guard against treachery. But this was what he would by no means agree to; and declared that he had confidence enough in his own arm to meet three men without apprehension, or even more, if they had the audacity to present themselves against him. As soon as he was gone, the wife made haste to arm herself. She laced on a coat of mail, hung a sword by her side, tied a helmet on her head, and galloped after the braggadocio.

Already

Already had he reached the wood, where with a dreadful noise he was paying away upon his new shield. The wife at the first sight was seized with a violent fit of laughter; but, composing herself, came up, and in order to pick a quarrel with him, addressed him in the following abrupt manner: "Slave, by what authority dost thou come here to cut down my trees, and interrupt my progress with that disagreeable uproar? Is it to put it out of thy power to give me satisfaction that thou destroyest thy shield? Coward as thou art, cursed be he that does not despise thee as much as I do! I here arrest thee as my prisoner: follow me instantly to rot in one of my dungeons."

The poor knight was at this address ready to drop down with fear. He found himself caught without the least chance of escaping, and did not feel courageous enough to fight. If a child that moment had advanced towards him, he durst not have

have put himself on the defensive. His sword soon dropped from his hands; he intreated forgiveness, and promised never again to enter the wood during life; and further offered, if he had done any damage, to make it good an hundred times over.—“Base-minded wretch, to imagine that gold can repress the indignation, and avert the vengeance of a brave man. I shall shortly teach thee another language. Before we leave this place, our quarrel must be decided by arms. Quickly mount thy horse, and think of defending thyself; for I never grant quarter: and I give thee notice before hand, that if thou art vanquished, thy head instantly flies off thy shoulders.” At the same time, she lets fall a smart blow on his helmet. The terrified wretch answered trembling, that he had made a vow to God never to fight, and asked, if it were not possible by any other means to make reparation. He was informed that there was one method, and only one.—

Here

Here it is necessary to interrupt the narration, and to claim the indulgence of the reader; who it is to be hoped will excuse my just mentioning, that the fair warrior proposes to the recreant Knight to kiss a certain part of her body, as an expiation for the offence; that the poltroon acquiesces; that the one dismounts and presents without mask or veil, the object to which the other is to make submission, whilst the latter taking off his helmet, approaches with one knee upon the ground, and with great respect performs the ceremony, which suggests to him a very singular remark.

When he had risen up, he took the liberty of asking the name of his conqueror.—“Of what consequence is that to you? However, I will not conceal it from you, whimsical as it is, and though I am the only one of my family that has borne it. My name, then, is *Beranger*.—And my business is to shame cowards.” This said, the lady mounted her horse again and rode off.

On

On her way was the residence of a Knight, who had long been in love with her ; and whose suit till then she had always rejected. But now she went into his house, told him that at last she accepted his vows, and even took him home behind her.

Soon after the husband entered, affecting to put on his usual confidence ; when his people asked him the issue of his recent combat ; " I am now at length," said he, " going to enjoy quiet ; my lands are entirely cleared of the free booters that infested them."

After he had disarmed, he went in to give his wife an account of his last exploit, and was greatly surprized to see a man sitting by her side upon the couch, and to observe her embracing the stranger instead of getting up to receive him. He began to assume that imperious and threatening tone that had become fami-

— No about him a liar

liar to him, and even pretended to go and bring his sword. " Hold your peace," said she, you poltroon ! or if you dare so much as to breath, I shall send for *Beranger*,—you know how he treats cowards."

That word closed his mouth. He withdrew in confusion; and whatever liberties his wife indulged in afterwards, he durst not throw out the least reproach, lest she should publish his adventures in the forest.

THE WOMAN THAT MADE THRICE THE
CIRCUIT OF THE CHURCH.

A HUSBAND that endeavours to entrap a cunning wife, might as well attempt to catch the devil. Though he beat her for a whole day together, and half kill her with stripes, they will have no effect the next, but she will be ready to recommence her old tricks. It is really curious to see a woman who has a simpleton for a husband, and has a design in persuading him to any thing. Observe her artifice; she will contrive to wind and twist him in such a manner, as to make him believe at last that the heavens tumble down in cinders.

I made this remark from the conduct of a young woman, who was married to a 'Squire, either of *Beausse* or *Berry*; at present

sent I do not recollect which. But what I remember well, is that she had an intrigue with the Parson, and that she had so violent a regard for him, that there was nothing, however difficult, that she would not readily undertake, if he required, to prove her affection.

In effect, on her coming one day to church, the Priest after the service was over, begged her to meet him at night, as he said for some very important affair, in a certain shrubbery; which she agreed to without hesitation. What rendered it then more convenient for her, was the husband being absent from home. As to the business the parson had with her, I can give you no account of it. I shall only tell you, that their houses, built in the middle of a large thicket, were full a quarter of a league distant from each other; that about half way between the two was the shrubbery, and

that it belonged to the servant of *St. Arnold*.*

In the -evening, when the sun was down, and the Parson thought he could slip out, without being perceived, he went privately to the shrubbery, and there waited for the dame. She was preparing on her part, to give him the meeting, when suddenly her husband entered the house, and by his unexpected return, hastily deranged the rendezvous. Any other woman, doubtless, would have been disconcerted, and at a loss what to do; but our heroine had no notion of forfeiting her word for such a trifling impediment, and notwithstanding this unseasonable interruption, she got in readiness to keep her appointment.

The

* This alludes to a pleasantry that occurs in some of the old French Romances; as in the famous *Romance of the Rose*:

Suis je mis dans la confrairie

Saint Arnould, le Seigneur des Coux ?

The husband was fatigued and wet. Under pretence of not suffering him to wait in danger of getting cold, she served him with supper immediately, and you may easily conceive she did not trifle away her time in preparing several dishes. " My dear, said she every moment, you are tired ; let me advise you to eat but little. When one has walked a great way repose is most wanted. Come and lie down ; take my advice ; and do not go and dry yourself by the fire merely to sit up." She was so impatient to get rid of him, that she would hardly allow him time to finish his meal, but almost snatched the victuals out of his mouth. At length, by preaching to him in the same strain, she so far prevailed on her good man, that flattered with her care and attention, he suffered himself, though he had not half satisfied his hunger, to be conducted to bed.

He reckoned that his wife was going to lie down with him : but seeing that she did not begin to undress, he asked her the reason. " Sir," said she, " it is still time enough for me. You know that I am pressed to finish the cloth I have been working. Go to sleep ; while I go on with my work."—" Surely the woman is possessed with the devil," replied the husband in a discontented tone. " She has always something to do, when I lie down, and then the next morning it is as difficult to rouse her."

Nevertheless, after grumbling a little longer, he crossed himself and fell asleep. The wife you may imagine, did not waste her time in watching him ; but ran in haste to the shrubbery, where her friend waited for her, and where that important affair I mentioned, was so satisfactorily discussed, that the time slipped away without their being aware of it.

About midnight the 'Squire awaked, and, surprized not to find his wife by his side, called the chambermaid to know what was become of her. She told me, answered the servant, when she went out, that not to lose time she was going to finish her work at her godmother's. We need not doubt that the 'Squire made a wry face, when he learnt that his wife was out at so late an hour. He quickly put on his cloaths and ran to the godmother's, who was fast asleep in bed, and knew nothing of the 'Squire's errand. Too well convinced then of what he had apprehended, he returned homeward in a fury; and from some suspicions that arose in his head, he thought of taking the shrubbery in his way. But the wife was lucky enough to perceive him coming, and kept herself so close, that he passed by without discovering her. Nevertheless, it being time to return home, after he had got to some distance, she arose and took leave of her friend. " I am

am in the greatest dread on your account," said the Priest; "you are going to get yourself killed; he will certainly dispatch you."—"Think only of yourself," replied she, smiling; "take care that you are not seen by any one; the rest is my business, and you may sleep in quiet."

On her entrance at home, she was received with a torrent of abuse. "Strumpet, vixen, whence came you? I'll engage you have been along with the Parson. (He said the truth, alas! without knowing it). I can now account for your importunity to get me to bed." She listened to his reproaches with astonishing coolness, did not answer a word, but let him throw away his fire, in hopes, no doubt, that the quarrel would end there. But when she found that he took her silence for a confession of her guilt, and in consequence seized her by the hair

to

to cut it off.* “ Stop,” she cried, “ and judge whether I am to blame. You know Sir, the extreme anxiety I have to get you an heir. I now think myself fully assured of one, and my vows are in part fulfilled already. But I am still ignorant of the sex of the infant that I have conceived, and that is what I am so desirous to know. I have been enquiring of every body ; I have questioned all my female friends, and they told me ——— but you will laugh at me :” and then, affecting a kind of bashfulness, she seemed to blush.

This

* It was the custom formerly among the Germans, and carried into Gaul by the Franks, for women convicted of adultery to have their heads shaved. A nation, that held the hair of the head in such esteem, as to make it a distinguishing sign of nobility, must have attached a stigma to the loss of it. Under the first race of Kings, the cutting off of the hair rendered a Prince of the blood incapable of succeeding to the crown.

This appearance of mystery, this air of embarrassment, and the beginning of an explanation so singular, excited the curiosity of the husband. He ordered her to go on. But she required a good deal of pressing, made him promise that he would not laugh at her, and at length as he was going to be angry, she proceeded: " Well, since you are resolved to know it, they instructed me in a secret, which they say is infallible; and this is it. One must go three nights running to the gate of the church, and each time walk three times round the walls without speaking; afterwards one must say the Lord's Prayer three times, and lastly dig a hole with one's nails in the earth. The third day after, one is to go and examine the hole. If it is open, the child will be a boy; if shut, a girl. The day before yesterday I began the solemn process; to night I finished my last circuit, and to-morrow I shall be acquainted with the issue;

issue; or as it is now past midnight, I can this instant learn it, if you will give me leave."

She then begged her husband to return with her to the church. It was in vain that he endeavoured to be excused, and urged that it would be soon enough when they went to mass; she pressed him so importunately, and shewed so extravagant a desire to satisfy her longings, that the honest squire, in consideration of the condition she declared herself to be in, at last agreed to accompany her. Although there was light enough to direct their way, she insisted on taking a lanthorn, that they might see the better.

When they arrived at the church gate, she shews him, at a small distance from it, the spot where she said she had been digging, and begs him to go and see what she was to expect. He approaches the place, looks about, opens the lanthorn,

thorn, looks again, and cries he can find no hole. At this intelligence the wife runs up to him in transport. She throws her arms round his neck, weeps through joy, embraces him over and over again, falls upon her knees to thank God for the favour she has obtained, and plays so many extravagant tricks, that the husband, enraptured likewise, embraces her in his turn, and returns home with her full of joy.

What are we to deduce from this story? only this: when a woman has got a simple husband, it is her own fault, if she does not obtain all that she desires.

THE WOMAN THAT ENSNARED A PRIEST,
A PROVOST AND A RANGER;

OR,

CONSTANT DU HAMEL.

ISABEL, a young and handsome wife of an industrious, hard-working man, named *Constant du Hamel*, had at one time in the train of her admirers the Parson of the parish, the Provost, and the Ranger of the forest. They all three made their addresses, offering for her favour, the first twenty livres, the second ten, and the last a gold ring. To all their solicitations the prudent wife answered, that her husband maintained her by his labour, and that in return she contributed to his happiness; that she should esteem herself the most contemptible of beings, if she were to repay his goodness with infidelity.

One day our three lovers met to take a glass of wine together. Soon being warmed by the liquor, they began to talk of what was uppermost in their thoughts, that is, dame *Isabel*. One declared that he would readily fast forty days, to break it at the expiration of that time with so dainty a morsel; another, that to pass a night with her, he would submit to die the next morning. The parson, being more enterprising, exclaimed against their want of spirit, and asserted that if they would only come to a good understanding together, they might all three have this fine woman at a much easier rate. "All that is necessary to be done," said he, "is to ruin the clown, her husband, and either to get him locked up, or oblige him to fly the country. When she finds herself in distress, she must come to us in her turn, and humbly accept what she now rejects with so much haughtiness." This wicked project was adopted; and the three fornicators agreed on the

part each should take in it. On the Sunday following the pastor mounted the pulpit, and seeing Constant in the church, he denounced before the parishioners his excommunication, as one who had infringed the holy canons, by marrying his godmother. In consequence he ordered them to turn him out of the church; otherwise the divine service would be suspended. The villager on this retired in consternation. He went to the Parson's house, waited there till the Priest returned home; and conjured him with uplifted hands to have compassion on him, and to procure his absolution of the Archbishop. He even offered to pay for the favour before hand, and proposed eight livres. The other accepted his offer, the more readily, as by that means he hoped to make the poor pay for the civilities he expected from the wife.

Constant returned home in tears. *Isabel* embracing him affectionately, asked

him the cause of his sorrow. She soon saw without difficulty into the motive of the persecution, and comforted him with the assurance that she would find means to put a stop to it that night. They sat down to table; but scarcely had they commenced their meal, before a messenger arrived to summons *Constant* before the Provost.

This messenger accused him of having in the night broke into the Lord's barn, and stolen his corn; and for this pretended offence, he ordered him to be imprisoned, and threatened that the next day the gallows should be prepared for him. The unhappy man in vain protested that in the course of his life he had never robbed any one, and that he would rather die than steal a grain. His protestations were treated as mere falsehood; and suborned evidence was set up, that the traces of the corn were found from the barn to his house. At last, finding that he was to expect

expect nothing less than condemnation to die; he judged it most adviseable to compound for mercy, and offered the Provost twenty livres, which he accepted.

On his way home, he perceived his servant running towards him; this man came with the news that the ranger had seized his two oxen, "on account," as he says, "of your having last week cut down several trees in the forest." *Constant* then throws down his hood, and runs after the Ranger. But this affair turned out like the others; the poor devil could not get back his oxen, without engaging to pay an hundred pence for their ransom.

He returns to lament his misfortunes: but his wife makes light of these persecutions, and promises *Constant* to give him shortly ample vengeance on his three
I 3 enemies,

enemies, and to afford him as much diversion at their cost, as he has already experienced chagrin.

The next morning after having concealed her husband, *Isabel* calls *Galatrot* her maid servant, and orders her to warm some water for a bath. While the water is warming, she acquaints the girl with all the particulars of her correspondence with the three gallants, as well as with her design of punishing them; and then sends her to the Parson. "You must tell him in confidence," said she, "that *Constant* is obliged to pay twenty livres to-day, and is not in possession of a sou; and that if he will come and bring me the sum he last offered me, he need not fear meeting with a good reception."

Galatrot was a clumsy country wench, of a heavy, stupid appearance, but with a great deal of cunning and archness at bottom. She performed her part at the Parson's

Parson's so dextrously, that he in his transport embraced her and gave her twenty-pence to buy her a petticoat. He then went to his strong box for the sum required, and putting on a scarlet mantle, trimmed with white fur, he hastened with his offering. The dame received him with great good-humour, and chatted with him for a little while. She then proposed, before she discharged the obligation, that they should bath together. He agreed to it cordially: but no sooner was he in the bath, than she carried off his cloaths, and put them under lock and key; after which she dispatched her maid servant to the provost.

"You have no claim to any further regard from me," said *Galotrot* to him, "since you seem to have forgot me. See what it is to be rich; one becomes too proud to salute one's own relations. But, for my part, I have no malice in my nature, and am inclined to return good for

for evil. There's my mistress in the greatest distress at home. She is in want of money. Go, and take advantage of the opportunity ; but for your life don't say that I sent you."

The Provost made a thousand apologies to his fat cousin for the neglect of which she complained ; he paid her a great many compliments, and, what was better, gave her twenty pence as well as the Parson ; then supplying himself with money, he went with her and knocked at *Isabel's* door. "Heavens! It is my husband," cried the wife. At this intelligence, the parson leaped out of the bath ; and being naked laboured under the most dreadful apprehensions from the discovery. Not knowing where to hide himself, "go," said she, "into the next room, and conceal yourself in that great barrel, where you will find plenty of feathers."

thers. I'll cover you with this winnowing fan. *Constant* will never think of looking for you there.

Isabel had no sooner caged her first lover, than she went to open the door for the second. She likewise proposed bathing to him, secured his cloaths in the same manner, and then sent *Galotrot* to the Ranger.

"My mistress gave you but an indifferent reception yesterday," says *Galotrot*, to the forester. "I have given her a smart lesson for it, and have brought her to acknowledge, that your ring would suit her finger admirably. After that you know best what to do. All I wanted was to give you a proof of my good will, and must return home immediately,"

The gallant, delighted with the information, gave *Galotrot* ten pence, and posted with his ring to *Isabel*. She being pressed

pressed by the Provost to come into the bath, began to undress herself, but to gain time, did it as slowly as possible. At the noise made by the Ranger at the door, she seemed terrified, and cried out as before, "It is my husband ! I am undone !" The Provost knows not where to run ; till she directs him likewise to the large cask. He jumps in feet foremost, and comes with violence upon the parson, who had crept under the feathers to conceal himself. The latter cries out with the pain. This leads them to a discovery of each other ; they find that they are caught in the same trap ; but it was then too late ; they could not get out, but must wait the issue.

Very soon the same manœuvre was played upon the Ranger, who joined the other two in the cask : for *Constant* to frighten him, called out from his hiding place, and came forward with an axe in his hand. *Isabel* then, to be completely
 revenged,

revenged, proposed to her husband, to send for the wives of the three prisoners, one after another, and on the very spot to confer upon them the honours they had intended for him.

Galotrot is again employed as the messenger. First arrives the Parson's wife. *Isabel*, through civility, offers her the bath; the dame undresses; but as she is going to enter the tub, *Constant* appears, and quickly makes her expiate her husband's offence. The Provost and the Ranger, who from their hiding place, are spectators of the scene, rally the Priest on it. Soon after their wives come, when the laugh is turned against them, and the Parson banters them in his turn.

But the prisoners are not let off with this. *Constant*, coming up to the cask with his hatchet in one hand, and a candle in the other, enquires who threw such a quantity of feathers and rubbish there, and

and immediately sets it on fire. This makes the gentry within think in earnest of their escape. They spring up, and run out of the house, whilst he pursues them with a large stick, and sets his dogs loose after them. From all parts the cry is raised, and chase given to those naked, feathered monsters. All the bells are set a ringing. Men, women and children join in pursuit, all striving to get up with them, and each to strike his blow. At last they take refuge in a house, where they are obliged to declare who they are, and to sue for mercy. Thus *Constant*, by the adventure, got trinkets, money and amusement.

* * This story has been imitated by several authors; but they have only taken, what they should rather have omitted, the ludicrous adventure with which it concludes. The Remois of La Fontaine is founded on it; and *Boccaccio* has given something similar in his 8th *Giornata*.

THE QUEEN THAT KILLED HER SENESCHAL.

IN Egypt there lived formerly a King, young, handsome, and free from every kind of vice. What he was principally attached to was the chase; his dogs, birds and horses were the great sources of his amusement. One day, as he was stag-hunting, a dreadful tempest arising suddenly, separated him from his companions in the pursuit. Fear and confusion had scattered them so completely, that not a single equerry or huntsman remained with the King. The royal sportsman placed himself under a large tree for shelter till the rain abated: and then proceeded, as chance directed him; every minute stopping to listen for the sound of the dogs or the horn. Finding the night approach, and not knowing his way, he luckily espied a small path, and resolved to pursue it at all hazards,

in hopes that it might conduct him towards some habitation. In effect, it fooled him entirely out of the forest, and further presented him with the pleasing view of a strong and well built castle.

All the residents of the castle had already retired to rest; so that the king was obliged to knock and call several times. He declared himself a Knight that had lost his way, and asked for shelter from the owner of the castle. The porter went immediately to call his master, who arose in haste, and came to receive the pretended Knight at the draw-bridge. He there recognized the King; received him with the respect due to his sovereign, and ordered his wife and daughter to dress themselves with expedition and come to pay their respects to the royal guest.

Soon after the hostess entered the hall, leading in her hand the daughter, a young lady of prodigious beauty. They made
a low

a low courtesy to the prince, who returned the salute with politeness, but not without agitation : for he had no sooner cast his eyes upon the Castellan's daughter, than he was captivated with her charms. While supper was preparing, he sat down near the lovely object, and kept his eyes rivetted upon her. The tables were at length spread, and covered with delicacies that might have provoked the most indifferent appetite ; but the enamoured Prince could attend to nothing but the new object of his admiration, and was content to feast his eyes in the contemplation of her charms. " What perfection, exclaimed he to himself, has nature centered in this beautiful creature ! What are all my riches in comparison with so precious a jewel ; I cannot resist the satisfaction I feel in loving her, and if she will consent to make a return to my passion, I certainly shall not scruple to place her upon my throne."

After supper, the King, who was much fatigued, retired to the chamber that was prepared for him. Yet how much soever his limbs might want repose, he could not sleep the whole night, but passed it in anxious thought and amorous solicitude. "But why torment myself?" said he at last. "Does it not rest entirely with myself, whether I marry the maid and put an end to my uneasiness. Yes assuredly, the father will not object to my proposal, but will embrace it with as much pleasure as I can make the offer."

Accordingly, the next day, when the Lord came with his wife and daughter to pay his respects to the Sovereign, the latter desired the young lady to sit down by him, and addressed himself thus to the father: "My kind host, I have to propose an husband for your daughter, who I hope will suit you. That husband, Sir, is myself. I love the damsel, and if you will

will consent to give me her hand, she shall be my Queen, as I expect that her qualifications will correspond with your rank and her beauty."

At these words the two parents and the daughter threw themselves at the King's feet, to thank him for the favour he intended them. They were immediately betrothed to each other; after which the royal suite appeared at the gates of the castle. They had learnt at last that he was there, having been the whole night in search of him. The King presented to them his destined bride; and after a few hours stay went off with his attendants, promising the parents that he would within three days return to celebrate and consummate the nuptials. But he first took the young lady aside, and in his impatience to enjoy such heavenly charms, he entreated her to favour him the next night with a private interview. She who was all simplicity, had no idea

but that the moment they were betrothed the bridegroom entered into full possession of a husband's rights ; she therefore not only complied with his request, but even gave him a key of the sally-port, that he might gain admittance unperceived, and promised to leave open the door of her chamber. Thus did this unsuspecting, innocent girl, pave the way for her own ruin, without being aware of it, and by too much confidence and want of caution, doom herself to the most bitter anguish and affliction.

Among the officers in the King's suite, was his Seneschal,* a man of a greedy and brutal disposition, who harrassed the vassals in such a manner, as to have become universally hated by them. The monarch could not help speaking to him on the road, concerning the object of his love,

* A kind of Steward, or one that united the offices of Steward and Chamberlain.

love, and particularly expressed his eagerness to enjoy the pleasures of the next day's assignation. "Sire," said the Seneschal, "I am your servant, and hold it my duty to do all that lies within my power to preserve your honour. Then, reflect, Sir, that what you now propose would be a very singular abuse of the simplicity of the girl; and to take so dishonourable an advantage, would in the end, instead of pleasure, be productive of nothing but shame and sorrow." This reproof made its impression on the King. He repented of his purpose, and tied himself down by a solemn oath not to keep the assignation; nay, further to secure himself from temptation, he put it out of his own power to transgress, by giving the key to his confident.

Now, that was exactly what the perfidious wretch wanted. He had been struck with love and desire by the beautiful simplicity, and graceful charms of the

the damsel. His passion had entirely got the command of him, and in dissuading the King from going to her chamber, his aim was to get there himself. By means of the key and the appointment that had been fixed, he easily attained his purpose. He found the chamber door open, and the betrothed virgin in bed.—But scarcely had she forfeited that precious name, before she suspected some artifice. “The King, my husband,” said she within herself, is young and well made. He has not the clumsy shape of this man. Ah! should this be any other than he, I should surely die with shame and vexation!”

While these reflections filled her mind with dubious anguish, the Seneschal fell asleep. She then got up softly, went for a light, and in the utmost apprehension approached the bed to examine who was in it. Judge of her distraction, when she found it was the Seneschal! “The wretch has betrayed me!” she cried: “but let him

him have a just return for it." In saying which, she espied his sword near the bed, and seizing it, stabbed him to the heart. Thus died the Villain; thus did his perfidy meet with the punishment it deserved.

But now that she had taken her revenge, something still remained to be done. It was necessary to get rid of the dead body; and that was not to be so easily accomplished. Fortunately there happened to be in the castle a female cousin of her's; a young lady much of the same age, and her intimate friend. She went to awake this confident, and to acquaint her of the double misfortune. The latter proposed that the body should be thrown into an old neglected well, near one of the turrets of the castle. Thither they dragged the Seneschal, not without difficulty; and to prevent a discovery, after throwing him in, covered him with earth, stones and dung. They then

then washed away carefully all traces of blood, so that on the break of day there was not the least vestige left. As on his departure he had not declared whither he was going, no suspicion arose of what had happened. A search was made after him for a few days; but all enquiries being ineffectual, he was given up as lost and soon forgotten.

Meanwhile the King, stimulated by his passion, assembled his barons, to consult them respecting the nuptials; and with their approbation he returned to the residence of his beautiful mistress, whom that very day he married. The assemblage on this joyful occasion was numerous both in knights and ladies, and the usual celebrities were exhibited. But at night the Queen found herself exceedingly embarrassed. Since the Seneschal had ravished from her by artifice, what she ought to have preserved for her husband, she reflected that she was not in a condition

condition to furnish those proofs of virtue, which a bridegroom has a right to expect. She intreated then her cousin to come once more to her assistance, and to occupy her place for that night by the King's side. "As soon as the lights are extinguished," said she, "I will conduct you to his bed in my room; and when sleep has closed his eyes, I will come and resume my situation." This stratagem succeeded. The cousin with great complaisance consented to act the part proposed to her: the King was imposed on, and towards the middle of the night fell fast asleep.

The Queen was all this time upon the watch, full of anxiety and apprehension. When she found the prince was asleep, she entered the chamber, and going softly up to the bed, pulled her cousin by the foot, as a signal for her to retire; but this last became treacherous in her turn, refused to obey it, and declared, in spite of the
other's

other's tears and entreaties, that she would not stir from the bed without the King; that she would be Queen since she had the honour of representing the character. She then turned about to sleep. The Queen on this found it necessary to keep terms no longer. She took a handkerchief, tied her cousin to the bed-post, and set fire to the cloaths. The whole was quickly in flames. The King, awakened by the heat, jumped out, saved himself in his shirt, and was happy to find the Queen, his wife, out of danger. The progress of the fire was soon stopped; but the apartment was consumed, and the faithless cousin in it, who reaped no other fruit from her treachery. The following day the royal couple took their departure, and went to the King's Palace, where they lived happily together.

In the midst of her happiness, the conscience of the Queen reproached her with the two murders she had perpetrated.

Nevertheless,

Nevertheless, she had not the resolution to confess them. To stifle these compunctions of remorse, she goes every day to mass, builds churches to the Virgin, and endows convents. At length she determined to ease her mind by a confession: and for that purpose addressed herself to the Chaplain of the palace. This man was a hypocrite and had entertained a desire for the Queen's person. At the recital of the transaction, he reprimanded her severely, and signified to her that it could not be expiated any otherwise than by death upon the pile. He gave her a hint, however, that a little complaisance towards him might save her. She answered his proposal with the strongest abhorrence and indignation. "If I have injured my Lord and Sovereign," said she, "it has been innocently and through ignorance on my part. Know that I am resolved to preserve during life my fide-

lity to him; and that I would expire in the flames sooner than sully his honour and my own."

The Chaplain goes immediately to reveal her confession to the King; and, to verify it, he conducts his majesty to the well, where they really found the remains of the Seneschal. Instantly the Queen was seized, tried by the Bishops and condemned to be burnt. Already were they conducting her to execution, when she implored the succour of the Virgin, whom she had ever devoutly served; and her prayers were not ineffectual. An aged hermit, sent by our lady, comes up to the Monarch, and acquaints him that she had taken the Queen under her holy protection. The King, in consequence, sends for his consort. She arrives with her hands bound, and her eyes covered with a bandage. But on a sudden the bonds were loosened and the bandage fell from her face; at the same time a dove descended,

descended, and placed upon her head a paper, on which was written an account of her innocence, and the crime of the Chaplain. The King then embraced his consort, intreated her forgiveness; and punished the Chaplain, by devoting him to the fate he had intended for the Queen.

* * The reader will observe some resemblance between this Tale, and the History of the Amours of Athelwold and Elfrida in the Saxon Annals. It is probable, that the Monk who wrote this fable, took the first idea from the history, though the particulars differ widely.



THE KNIGHT THAT CONFESSED HIS WIFE.

NOT far from *Vire*, in the district of *Bessin*, there was a household, that was held up as a model of concord to all the neighbourhood. / The husband, a worthy Knight, had so much love for his wife, and reposed so entire a confidence in her, that he not only left her entirely mistress of her own conduct; but he even carried his complaisance so far, as not to enter himself into the most trifling undertaking, without first consulting her. The dame enjoyed an unsullied reputation in the country. Thus did she pass with her turtle-dove many happy years. But all on a sudden, she was taken ill so dangerously as to be alarmed for her life. She sent on the occasion for the Parson of the parish, made her confession to him, and placed in his hands, for pious uses, all that belonged to her. Nevertheless,

not

not thinking one absolution enough, she called her husband : " My dear Lord," said she, " render me a service. I have often heard talk of a votary of a neighbouring monastery, whom all the world declares an holy man. In my present condition, I should be greatly relieved in mind, if through him I could effect my reconciliation with God ; send, I intreat you, one of your servants for him."—" I will not send," answered the complainant husband, " but will go myself." He accordingly mounted his horse, and repaired to the monastery. But on the way he began a series of reflections on this folly of having a second confessor. Such earnest desire of the patient incited his curiosity to learn the motive ; and in order to know it with certainty, he resolved to return and put himself in the place of the monk.

Being arrived at the convent, he went to pay a visit to the Prior. This man

who was his particular acquaintance, on seeing the Knight approach ran to meet him, and ordered his horse to be taken care of by a servant. " I think myself infinitely indebted to you, said he, for this unexpected visit. Come in, and since you have given me the pleasure of your company at last, I give you notice that I shall not quickly part with it."—" My good Sir," answered the Knight, " I am extremely obliged to you, and no one can be more sensible of your civility ; but I cannot possibly reap the advantage of it. I must return instantly ; and am only come to beg you will do me a small service. I want for a short time, one of your robes : lend it to me, I pray, with your horse and boots. I will come back at midnight, and return them to you." The Prior assented ; and the Knight, dressing himself in the monastic habit, went in that disguise towards his castle.

In order that he might not be discovered, he took care not to get there till night, and to let down his hood in such manner as entirely to cover his face. A valet assisted him in dismounting, and presented him to one of the female servants, by whom he was conducted to the sick lady's apartment. There was no other light in the room, than what was afforded by a small lamp, set in the further end of the fire-place. "Madam," said the girl, "here is the holy man you sent for."—"Introduce him to the bedside," answered the lady, "and leave us together.—Ah! Sir," added she, addressing herself to the pretended Monk, "how long have I been anxiously desirous to see you. I am greatly in want of consolation. Sit down, I intreat you."—"My good lady," answered he in a counterfeited tone of voice, "it is a proof of your good sense, that you are anxious to recover God's grace. He is the sole arbiter of life and death, and can deprive us
of

of existence in a moment. Have confidence then in his mercy, and humbly make confession of your faults; but hide none of your transgressions; for you know it is written, one sin concealed is enough to destroy the soul."—"I have many to repent of," replied the wife; "I have enjoyed a good reputation, one that I have in no respect deserved. Alas! how often does it happen that a woman for one oversight encounters a disgrace that is infinitely more my due. I have often been unfaithful to my husband; and I pray God to pardon me for it."

At these words one may conceive the grimaces which the husband made under his hood. "Dame," said he, "you have been guilty of an enormous sin. Are you not instructed in your duties? Had you any reason to complain of your husband?"—"No, Sir; but you will find very few women who retain their fidelity. How young and handsome soever the husband may

may be, the desires of the wife preponderate over his love. Often he is so cold and indifferent as to neglect his duties. The wife, through fear of losing his esteem, or suggesting suspicions, dare not remind him of them; and in spite of all the resolutions she may have formed, necessity soon obliges her to make choice of another."—"And with whom have you transgressed," demanded the husband?"—"Ah! Sir, that is what aggravates my crime, and makes me now tremble for my salvation. It was with the nephew of my lord. I loved him to distraction, and should have died with grief, if I had not succeeded in raising in his breast a reciprocal passion. I at length accomplished it, after a long trial; and it is now full five years that we have cohabited together."—"With the nephew of your own husband! Why, lady, were you not aware, that such a connexion borders upon incest?"—"I knew it, Sir; but such is the extremity to which

we

we women of quality are reduced. Surrounded by servants, who are placed as spies upon our actions, we are obliged, if we wish to escape their notice, to chuse our lovers among those, whom they have the least reason to mistrust. This was the case of my nephew. An hundred times a day could he come in and go out of my apartment, without giving rise to any scandalous surmise; and of that circumstance I took advantage. Often have I shared with him the property of my husband; for I have acquired the entire superintendence in the castle, and have had all at my disposal. If strangers come, they enquire after me alone: they do not so much as reflect there is a master, who is in fact nobody, and whose power I have annihilated. Such is the disposition of women. They always aim at command; and it is a misfortune; for being naturally avaricious, they can never administer family affairs with credit."

The

The Knight was not desirous of hearing more. He enjoined the sick lady such and such penitence, and returned to the Prior with his habit; after which he came back to his own house, where his first care was, to turn his nephew out of doors.

A fortunate crisis saved the lady. In a few days, she got rid of her disorder: but one morning, as she was issuing her orders to the servants in her accustomed tone of authority, the husband was irritated by her imperious behaviour, and the recollection of what she had divulged; and rising up in heat, said: "By what authority, Madam, do you assume this insolence of conduct? I know, indeed, that it is the disposition of women, and that they always aim at command; but when they are dishonest, they ought to blush in the face of the world, and put on a little modesty."

The

The wife did but laugh at this effusion of rage, and answered with wonderful calmness: Trying spirit as thou art! thinkest thou that thy artifices are not to be detected? A fine stratagem to put on the appearance of a Monk! It was necessary then at the same time to change both voice and countenance. Confess at least that I have had tolerable revenge. Another, perhaps, in my situation, on seeing you come in that disguise to extort secrets from sick people, would have torn out your eyes. For my part, I was desirous of punishing your treachery in a different manner. Nevertheless, Sir, in amusing myself at your expence, I found means to give you a few seasonable hints. Your nephew, for instance, cost us a great deal of money. If I had proposed to send him away, you and he together would have contested it with me. But I used a more concise method, and in a moment he was sent about his business. You forget sometimes, my good Sir, that you have

have certain duties to perform ; and although, as you well know, I am not very strict in requiring the discharge of them, yet you will do well to have them now and then in recollection. In fine, you place on me an absolute reliance ; I am certainly much obliged to you for your good opinion, and shall always endeavour not to abuse it ; but would it not be more becoming sometimes to put on the air of a man, that knows something of his own affairs ? If you had lost me, for example, what would you have done at this instant ? It is not my interest but yours that I consider in all this ; for, notwithstanding your provoking reproof, I cannot help loving you. As for my conduct, it is irreproachable. I can boldly walk with my head upright, and do not fear under heaven a living person, who can boast of being able to put me to the blush."

The Knight could not do otherwise than yield to such plausible arguments, He acknowledged the injustice of his suspicions, and asked pardon for them with all humility ; and, impressed with admiration for so respectable a wife, he became still more submissive than he had been before. But when the affair was known in the neighbourhood, it gave rise among malignant people to a great deal of laughter.

*** In the *Hundred novels of the Count of Burgundy*, a Knight, returning home from a long journey, is surprised to find effects that were not in the house at his departure. He is curious to know the cause ; and, on a certain festival, as his wife was going to confession, he hid himself in the confessional to over-hear her. After acknowledging a few peccadillos, she confesses an amour with an Esquire, a Knight and a Priest. The husband cries out and declares himself. But the wife, with admirable presence of mind,

mind, answers him : " Were you not an Esquire; when I married you ? You afterwards became a Knight, and behold you are now a priest ! "

La Fontaine, who copied this Tale, has made no alteration in it.

In *Boccace*, a woman rigorously treated and shut up by her husband, wishes to have a free commerce with a youth whom she loves, and whose house is separated from hers only by a wall. For that purpose she takes it into her head to tell her husband, that she wants to go out to confess. The husband in like manner places himself in the confessional. She acknowledges loving a priest, who every night comes to lie with her. The jealous husband goes the following night with a poignard, to wait the coming of the supposed priest at his door, and to assassinate him. In the mean time, the gallant repairs to the rendezvous through the roof. At last, after laying wait several nights, the husband breaks out in reproaches against his wife, and lets her know that he is in the secret. I only wanted to punish you, she replies, for your curiosity; I told you that I lay every night with a Priest, and I was right; for, at the time, you were one.

Bandello makes the husband suborn the Priest, to learn by his means the confession of his wife,

and afterwards poignards him.—Let these violent jealousies and assassinations of the two Italian novellists, be compared with the three French stories; and we shall then see with what truth people describe their national character without intending it !

AUCASSIN

AUCASSIN AND NICOLETTE.

THE Count *Bongars* of *Valence*, had for the space of ten years waged a bloody war against *Garins*, Count of *Beaucaire*. Constantly at the very gates of his city, with an hundred Knights and a thousand men at arms, did *Bongars* ravage and lay waste the country. *Garins*, old and infirm, could no longer put himself at the head of his vassals. *Aucassin*, his son, might have occupied his place with glory: he was a young man of great comeliness and strength; but love, that subdues all, had overpowered him, and had so entirely engaged his soul, that he would hear neither of tournaments or battles.

Often did his parents say to him: "Go, dearest son, take a horse and arms, and succour your people. With you at their head they will with more ardent courage

defend their walls, their homes and their lives. " Father," *Aucassin* would answer, " I have already declared to you my fixed resolution. May God never grant my prayer, if I gird on a sword, mount a horse, or take part either in a tournament, or a combat, till you have agreed to let me have *Nicolette*, my lovely mistress, the sole object of my cares."—" My good son," replied the father, " you require what I cannot think of granting. That girl is not worthy of you. The Viscount of *Beaucaire*, my vassal, who bought her when an infant, of the Saracens, and, who, at her baptism, deigned to stand as her god-father, will marry her some future day to one of her own rank, to some slave obliged to subsist by his labour. For your part, if you want a consort, I can procure you one of princely birth. Cast your eyes round France, and make your option: there is not a Sovereign Lord, who will not be happy to grant you his daughter, if we demand

demand her.”—“ Ah ! my father,” rejoined *Aucassin*, “ to what principality or kingdom on earth would not my charming *Nicolette* be an ornament !”

The father insisted still farther ; and the countess joined her entreaties and her threats to those of the Count, her husband ; but all the answer they could get was : “ My *Nicolette* is so charming ; her beauty and her kindness have so entirely engaged my heart, that I can neither enjoy authority or life without her.”

When the count *Garins* saw that he could not wean his son’s affections from *Nicolette*, he went to find the Viscount, his vassal, and to desire that she might be banished from his dominions. The Viscount, who feared the resentment of *Garins*, engaged that she should be sent into a country so remote, that she would never be heard of more. But he felt within himself

himself a compunction, that would not allow him to punish innocence, and to treat an unoffending virgin with so much cruelty. He besides had an affection for her; and instead of sending her into exile as he had promised, he thought it enough to conceal her under his own care.

At the extremity of his palace, there was a lonely chamber, enlightened only by a small window that looked into the garden. It was there that he resolved to shut up *Nicolette*. He was careful to provide her with every necessary of life and all the indulgence her confinement could afford; but at the same time, he allotted her for a guardian an old dame, who was made responsible for the maid, and charged not to lose sight of her.

Nicolette had beautiful fair locks, that waved in natural ringlets. Her eyes were blue and lively, her teeth small, white and regular,

regular, and her face admirably well proportioned. Her waist was but a span in circumference. Her complexion resembled the rose of the morning; her lips the cherry in summer; and the two little orbs, that swelled out under her robe, tarnished the colour of the snow. In short, there never was seen a more exquisite production of nature.

The poor orphan, when shut up in this prison, found her only consolation in going to the window. She cast her eyes upon the garden, where the flowers were blowing out, and the birds singing; and exclaimed piteously: "Unhappy creature that I am! Here then am I enclosed for ever! *Aucassin*! I know it is because I love you! But it is vain they torment me; never shall they work a change in my heart!"

As soon as *Nicolette* disappeared in *Beaucaire*, all were anxious to know the cause.

cause, Some avowed that she had fled; others, that Count *Garins* had caused her to be put to death. However it might affect others, *Aucassin* was ready to expire with the excess of his affliction. He went to the Viscount, and enquired of him concerning his mistress. "I have lost what was dearest to me on earth," said he; "is it by you that I am deprived of it? If I cannot survive the loss, you must be responsible: for you will have been the cause of my death, in ravishing from me that, for which alone I wished to live!"

The Viscount, with the design to shame him out of his passion, at first spoke contemptuously of the girl, as an unknown slave, who would soon give him cause for repentance, if with his pretensions to the daughters of sovereign princes, he should take her to his bed. But when he saw *Aucassin's* passion rise into rage, he was obliged to screen him-

self

self by avowing the orders he had received from Count *Garins*.* “ Form your

* Here the Viscount, in the original, says a few words of Paradise and Hell; a piece of morality rather out of its proper place, but which he seems to have introduced merely to tack a scrap of impiety to it. *Aucassin* answers the Viscount, that he does not wish to have any thing to do with Paradise; that all he desires is *Nicolette*, and that he gives himself very little concern about a place, that is merely a receptacle for lazy Monks, doting Priests, and ragged Hermits; that the Kings of the earth, Knights who died gloriously in battle, their brave and faithful Squires being only in Hell, he was determined to meet them there; and that he had no doubt of meeting likewise with beautiful women of tender hearts, gay minstrels and jugglers, enemies of sorrow; and, that if he could also enjoy the company of his *Nicolette* there, he would want no other happiness.——

This passage, with others which we have already seen, will give an idea of the manner of thinking that prevailed among the wits of those times,

your resolution," said he, "and renounce *Nicolette* for ever; for you will never see her more. And above all let your father be persuaded that you have banished her from your mind; otherwise I know not to what extreme his anger may carry him. Perhaps you may even cause her death and mine by the condemnation of your father."—"You drive me to despair," answered *Aucassin*; and without saying another word he withdrew, leaving the Viscount in no less trouble than himself. On his return to the palace, he went to his

times, as well as with the body of the people: for a licentious fable or tale of the thirteenth century was not, as it would be at present, the momentary or obscure production merely of an individual; but was, as it were, a species of coin with which two thousand minstrels or musicians at a time provided themselves, which they went about circulating in the palaces, castles and public places; and which by such means became current among the common people in all the provinces.

his chamber, to have leisure to give himself up to his grief; there he remained, overwhelmed with a load of sorrow, and refusing every kind of comfort or alleviation.

But while he was in this distraction on account of his separation from his mistress, the Count of *Bongars*, who wanted to put an end at once to the war, had come with his troops, to assault the castle of *Beaucaire*. The knights and warriors of the town had taken the alarm, and ran to the gates and the ramparts to defend themselves; while the citizens from the battlements poured down a shower of darts and pointed stakes. But a chief was wanted to animate and command the combatants.

The count ran distracted to his son's chamber. "Poltróon as thou art, wilt thou quietly sit by and see thy father stripped of all his possessions? what will

remain for thee, after this castle is taken? My son, mount your horse, go and join my vassals in defence of your inheritance. If you should not have even the courage to fight with them, your presence alone will augment their valour, and will enable them to conquer.”—“My father,” answered the youth, “spare yourself the trouble of making remonstrances that can be of no avail. I once more repeat my declaration; and I call upon the vengeance of God, if I go into battle either to give or receive a blow, till you grant me *Nicolette*.—“Son,” replied the Count, “I would rather sacrifice all.” On saying which, he retired.

Aucassin ran after him to call him back. “Well,” father,” said he, “accept a proposal. I will take up arms and go out to battle, on condition that you promise, if I return alive, to let me have another interview with *Nicolette*. I only require to speak a few words with her, and to exchange

change a kifs."—"Let it be so," answered the Count; "I give you my word for the performance. *Aucassin* then ordered arms to be brought to him, and mounting a horse full of mettle, with a helmet on his head, and lance in hand, he advanced to one of the gates and sallied out of it.

The joyful expectation of seeing soon his charming *Nicolette* and the idea above all of the promised kifs, had so filled his mind with pleasure, that he was transported beyond himself. His thoughts solely engaged on her, he moved forward without consulting either his ears or eyes, and spurred his horse with such animation, that he quickly carried him into the midst of the enemy's squadrons. It was not till he was furrounded on all sides, till they cried "that is the young Count *Aucassin*," and he found his shield and his lance wrested from him, that he recovered his senses. He then made a vigorous

effort to disengage himself from his adversaries. He unsheathed his sword, which he plied manfully on the right and left, cut off the heads and arms of his opponents, and like a wild boar beset by dogs in the forest, opened himself a passage covered with blood. At length after having killed or wounded seventeen knights, he made his way through the enemies' ranks, and pushing on at full speed regained the city.

The Count *Bongars*, hearing the cries that announced the capture of *Aucassin*, had made haste to partake of the triumph. *Aucassin* in his retreat recognized the Count, and gave him so violent a blow with his sword upon the helmet, that he unhorsed him. He then seized and dragged him into the city, to present him as a prisoner to his father. "Sire," said he, "here is the enemy, who for the space of ten years has given you so much alarm."—"Ah! my son," answered

ed the father, "it is thus that at your age a youth should signalize himself, and not by silly amours."—"Father," replied *Aucassin*, "no reflections, I intreat you; I have discharged my engagement; now think of performing yours."——

"What, my dear son?"—"What! did you not make me a solemn promise, that if I would go out to the battle, I should once more see and exchange a kiss with *Nicolette*? If you do not recollect the engagement, I, for my part, have not forgotten it."—"May I die instantly, if I agree to it! I would rather, were she in my power this moment, throw her before your face into the flames."—"Father, is that your final resolution?"—"Yes, by heavens?"—"Indeed I am much concerned to find you capable of such a breach of honour." Then turning to *Bongars*, "Count of *Valence*," said he, are you not my prisoner?"—"Most assuredly, Sir."—"Then give me your hand, and make a solemn oath never to

omit an occasion during life to hurt and disgrace my father."—"Sir, I am your prisoner, and you may require for my ransom what you please. Demand gold, silver, horses, dogs, furs,* either white or grey, I will engage for all; but cease, I pray you, to treat me with mockery and insult."—"I will have no reply, no gain-saying," answered *Aucassin*, "either comply with my requisition, or die this moment by my sword."

Bongars, terrified at this menace, made no further resistance: but took all the oaths required; after which his conqueror conducted him to one of the gates and set him at liberty. But all that *Aucassin* acquired

* These three last articles were the principal objects of luxury among the great. The sports of the field in particular constituted their favourite diversion; they consequently must have held trained birds and dogs in great estimation; they were indeed often the presents made to princes, and are here mentioned as things of value.

acquired by his atchievement, was the Count's order to be arrested and imprisoned in the tower.

Nicolette continued in her confinement strictly watched. One night being unable to compose her eyes to sleep, she perceived the moon shining with prodigious brightness in the firmament, and heard the nightingale's plaintive notes resound in the garden: for it was in that pleasant time of the year, when the days are long, and the nights serene. Her thoughts were then engaged on *Aucassin*, her lover, and the persecution she suffered from the Count *Garins*. The old woman appointed to guard her was at that moment asleep; and *Nicolette* thought the opportunity favourable for her escape. She rose without noise, put her filken mantua upon her shoulders, and fixing her sheets, tied together, to the fash of the window, she used them as a rope, and slipped down into the

the garden. By the light of the moon she discerned the garden gate, which she opened; and, obliged to cross the town in her flight, she arrived under the very tower, in which her lover was confined.

This tower was antient, and had crevices open in several places. The maid as she passed along, fancied she heard a person complaining; and applying her ear to one of those openings, she knew the voice to be that of *Aucassin*, who was lamenting his hapless love. When she had listened for some time, "*Aucassin*," said she, "gallant bachelor,* why weep and lament in vain? I am hateful to your father and your family; we cannot meet and live together; adieu! I am going to cross the seas, and to hide myself in a far distant country." On saying which she cut off a lock of her hair, and threw

* This expression, as was before observed, means a probationary Knight.

it into the tower. The lover received the gift with transport. He kissed it in raptures, and then concealed it in his bosom. But what *Nicolette* had just announced to him filled him with despair. "My charmer," he cried, "you must not leave me, unless you mean to doom me to destruction."

The sentinel, posted upon the tower, overheard their discourse, and pitied them. All at once he descried, at the further end of the street, the soldiers coming their rounds, with drawn swords under their cloaks. "She will be discovered and arrested," said he within himself, "what pity that so beautiful a damsel should perish! Alas! *Aucassin*, my Prince will also suffer."—The charitable sentinel would fain have warned *Nicolette* fully of her danger; but that the soldiers might not discover it, he could do it no otherwise than by a song apposite to the occasion.

The

The fair one easily divined the meaning of the song; and after breathing out an acknowledgment to the kind centinel, she wrapped herself up in her mantua, and favoured by the shadow of a post, hid herself in an angle of the tower, so that the soldiers passed by without perceiving her. When they had got to a distance, she bid adieu! to her lover, and approached the walls of the town, to seek a passage for her escape.

There was she terrified at first looking over, with the sight of a very deep ditch; but the danger that already threatened her, from the anger of the count *Garins*, overcame all lesser apprehensions; so, after commending herself to God she slipped down into the moat. Her delicate hands and tender feet, not used to such encounters, were wounded in several places. Nevertheless her fears made her insensible of the pain. But to have reached the bottom of the ditch was not enough

enough; it was necessary to climb the other brink; and here lay the difficulty. Her good fortune, however, directed her to one of those sharp-pointed stakes, that had been hurled by the defenders of the town upon the enemy in the late assault. This she employed to dig her way, first advancing with one foot, and then another; till at length, with much pain and labour, she reached the summit.*

At twice the distance of a bow-shot from the ditch, was the border of the forest, about one and twenty leagues in extent each way, and full of all sorts of venomous and ravenous animals. *Nicquette* durst not enter it, through fear of being devoured. On the other hand, as she was in imminent danger of being apprehended

* This proves that the ditches of fortified places were not made with a descent almost perpendicular as at present; but that they had a considerable slope on each side, after the manner of the antient fortresses.

prehended and carried back to prison, she ventured to conceal herself in a small thicket, which made the selvage of the wood. There, fatigued and exhausted, she lay down and slept till the morning, when some shepherds were driving their flocks to the adjacent verdure.

Whilst the animals fed on the borders of the forest, the shepherds went and sat down by a stream that winded round it. There spreading on the earth a cloak, they put their provisions down and began their breakfast. *Nicolette*, whom the noise awakened, approached them, and saluting them courteously enquired, if they knew *Aucassin*, son of *Garins*, the Count of *Beaucaire*. They answered in the affirmative; but the instant they cast their eyes upon her, they were dazzled at her charms, and took her for some fairy, that frequented the wood. She further said: "My friends, I desire that you will go and tell him, that there is here a white-coloured

coloured bitch, for which he would readily give five hundred monks in gold, or indeed all the gold in the world, if it was in his disposal; that he is desired to come and catch her, and that she is endowed with the virtue to cure him of all evils: but that, unless he comes within three days, he will never find her, and may renounce for ever all hopes of cure." She then opened her purse, and gave them some money, which they accepted; not undertaking to go to the town on purpose to acquaint *Aucassin*, with what she desired, but they promised to do it, if they should fall in with him: to which she assented and retired.

Charmed with the hopes she had received, she thought of nothing from that moment, but the reception she should give her lover. For that purpose, she constructed near the road, a small arbour, made of green branches; with which, at the same time, she was desirous of trying

him. " If his love is as violent as he declares, when he sees this, it will arrest his attention." When the arbour was completed, and garnished with flowers and odoriferous herbs, the fair one stepped aside a few paces, and sat down under a thicket, to see what *Aucassin* would do on his arrival.

He had been liberated from his imprisonment. The Viscount was no sooner informed of the escape of his ward, than he went, in order to allay any suspicions of the count his sovereign, to inform him, that she had died in the night; and *Garrins*, freed in consequence of her supposed death from his apprehensions, restored *Aucassin* to his liberty. He even took it into his head, for the consolation of his son, to give an entertainment to all his barons and vassals. The court assembled was numerous, and there abounded a variety of amusements; but *Aucassin* could taste no pleasure in the absence of his love.

love. Plunged in the deepest melancholy, he kept himself apart from the company, leaning sorrowfully against a pillar. A Knight coming up to him, said, "Sire, I have been sick like you, and of the same malady; I am therefore qualified to offer you my advice upon the subject. Get on horseback, and ride along the edge of the forest; the singing of the birds, the freshness of the verdure, the beauty of the flowers, or something else perhaps may afford you relief." *Aucassin* thanked him; and immediately withdrawing himself from the hall, and ordering his horse to be saddled, he rode out, and proceeded towards the forest.

The shepherds were sitting in the same place as in the morning, close by the margin of the stream. They had purchased two large cakes, which they had come to eat, spreading their cloke, as before, upon the grass. "Comrades," said one whose name was *Lucas*, "God

preserve our gentle Count *Aucassin*, and the damsel of the flaxen locks, to whose bounty we are indebted for these cakes."

Aucassin, overhearing this, suspected that his lovely *Nicolette* had been with them. He accosted them, and gave them money to induce them to a further explanation. When he asked them the meaning of what had just been spoken, the most intelligent of the band recounted the adventure of the morning, with the message they were charged to deliver to him, and the story of the white bitch, which he was invited to pursue. "God grant me to find it," said he, and entered the wood. His cloaths torn at every step by thorns and briars, were quickly reduced almost to tatters. His hands, his arms, his body, were so lacerated in a short time, that he might have been traced by his blood. But his mind was so occupied with the thoughts of *Nicolette*, that he was not sensible of any pain or inconvenience.

Thus

Thus did he pass the remainder of the day in a fruitless search. When the darkness of the night came on, he was obliged to desist for a while: but soon after the moon breaking out with splendour, he continued his progress. At length his good fortune led him to the harbour, which the fair damsel had constructed.

At sight of the flowers, with which the harbour was decorated, he said to himself: " Surely my *Nicolette* has been here, and it must be she that with her beauteous hands raised that green hut. For her sake I will pass the night in it." Instantly he dismounted from his horse; but such was his eagerness and precipitation, that he fell down and dislocated his shoulder. Notwithstanding this accident, he contrived, with the other arm, to fasten his horse to a tree. He then entered the harbour, and without thinking of his sufferings, he exclaimed in amorous transport:

transport: "Happy flowers and branches that have been culled by my charming *Nicolette*! How I envy your lot!"

The damsel was not far off, and overheard him. She ran to him with open arms and embraced him tenderly. "My *Aucassin*, have I again found you!" He on his part, locked her in his arms, and almost smothered her with his embraces. "Ah, *Nicolette*, but just now my sufferings were painful; but now that I hold you, I no longer feel anguish!" *Nicolette*, alarmed at what he said, asked him the cause of his pain; she felt his shoulder, which seemed to her out of order, and with the will of heaven she contrived to set it in its right place.* She then applied

* It was a part of the education of the girls to learn something of the practice of physic, a little of surgery, and particularly of that branch of surgery, that respects the treatment of wounds. This last endowment rendered them highly useful

plied to it the juice of certain salutary plants and herbs, of which she was acquainted with the virtues, and bound it with a fragment of her robe.

His hurt being thus healed, she asked him, what were his intentions. "Your father," said she, "when informed of your flight will, you may be assured, by break of day, send in pursuit of you persons who will beat the forest. If you are found I know not what will be the consequence; but, for my own part, I am aware that I shall be put to a cruel death." — "I shall take measures to prevent it," answered the youth; and mounting his horse,

to their fathers, their brothers and their husbands, when any of them came wounded or lamed from battle or the lists. Often did they likewise do the same kind office to strange Knights, who came wounded to their castles; and this may in part account for the extraordinary veneration and value in which the sex was held in the days of chivalry.

horse, he took up his mistress in his arms, and carried her off, kissing successively her forehead, her eyes and her mouth. She asked whither he was going; "I know not," answered he; nor do I think it of much import where I go, since I have you along with me."

After having traversed mountains and vallies, after passing through several towns and villages, they arrived at the sea-shore. *Aucassin* perceived some merchants in their vessels under sail. He made a signal; on which they hoisted out their boat, and he obtained a passage for himself and his mistress.

A dreadful storm arising obliged them soon to take shelter in the port of *Torlore*. In this city *Aucassin* resided three years, completely happy in the possession of his *Nicolette*. But a *Saracen* fleet came to disturb this repose. They attacked the castle, took it and pillaged the town and carried

carried off the inhabitants, taking with them the two lovers into captivity. The damsel was conveyed into one vessel, and the youth, bound hands and feet, into another.

On a sudden, a fresh gale arose, and separated the fleet. The vessel that bore *Aucassin*, tossed about from coast to coast, at last was driven into *Beaucaire*. The inhabitants, running to the shore, were happily surprized in the arrival of their young Count. His father and mother had both died during his absence. They therefore acknowledged him as their liege lord, and conducted him in pomp to the castle, where he took possession of his sovereignty, and where he had nothing to regret but the loss of *Nicolette*.

The vessel in which she was taken, belonged to the King of *Carthage*, who had come on that expedition with twelve sons, all Kings as well as himself. Ravished with

with her beauty, the young princes treated her with respect, and often asked the name of her parents and her country. " I am ignorant of it," answered she. " All I know is, that I was taken away from my parents at a very early age, and sold by Saracens." But on her entrance into *Cartbage*, what was her surprise to recognize the walls and streets of the place in which she had been brought up ! that of the King was not inferior, when, by some circumstances which she related, he found she was his own daughter. He threw his arms around her, and was dissolved in tears of joy. The princes embraced her, and overwhelmed her with careffes. A few days after they proposed to her the son of a Saracen King for her husband ; but she would not espouse a Saracen, and thought only of the means of recovering her lover, whose idea occupied her mind perpetually.

With

With this intention, she thought of learning to play on the violin. As soon as she had acquired it sufficiently, she made her escape at night from the palace, and went to the sea-shore, where she took up her abode with a poor woman. There, in order to disguise herself, she stained her hands and face with the juice of an herb: she then put on a youth's apparel, and obtained leave of a mariner, who was bound for Provence, to go on board his vessel. The voyage was prosperous. *Nicolette* disembarked with her violin; and in the guise of a Minstrel went playing through the country, till she arrived at *Beaucaire*.

Aucassin at the moment of her arrival, was sitting with his Barons on the steps before his palace. He looked towards the wood, where some years before he had fallen in with his beloved *Nicolette*, and the recollection drew forth a sigh. She approached, and without appearing to

to know him: "My Lords," said she, "would you wish to hear the amours of the accomplished *Aucassin* and *Nicolette* his mistress? All having testified the most anxious desire, she took out of a case her violin, and accompanying it with her voice, recounted how *Nicolette* loved *Aucassin*; how she escaped from prison; how they met in the forest, with all the particulars of their joint adventures to the time of their separation, and of her own, to her arrival at *Carthage*. During the whole of her song, *Aucassin* was almost transported. His heart was so oppressed, that it was with difficulty he could draw breath. When she had finished, he took aside the pretended minstrel, and asked if he knew this *Nicolette*, of whom he had been singing. Our minstrel answered, that he had seen her at *Carthage*, and that she was the most faithful lover, the most constant and loyal that had ever existed. She then related the manner in which *Nicolette* was discovered by the King her father;

ther; and all the trouble she had suffered on account of the proposed marriage. "I beg, my good friend," said *Aucassin*, "that you will return to her, and tell her from me, that if I had known what country had the happiness to contain her, I should quickly have flown to her relief. Tell her, that I have been continually in the most anxious expectation of her, and that I have sworn never to espouse any other woman. Go; and if you can prevail on her to come and give me her hand, you shall receive in recompense, as much gold and silver as you can demand, or I can give."

On the pretended minstrel's promise to use his utmost efforts to execute his commission with effect, *Aucassin* presented him before-hand with twenty marks of silver. The damsel withdrew; but in turning her head to take a parting look at her lover, she perceived his cheeks bedewed with tears. Her heart was melted at the

fight. She came back to desire that he would take courage, and assured him that, in a very short time, sooner perhaps than he himself expected, he should see once more his beloved mistress.

On leaving the Count's palace, *Nicolette* repaired to that of the Vicount of *Beaucaire*. She found that he had died some time before, and demanded an audience of the widow, to whom she made herself known. This lady, who had brought up, under her own inspection the charming infant, and had considered it as her own child, was overjoyed to see her, and provided her with apartments in the house. *Nicolette*, by means of an herb, got rid of the artificial black, which she had assumed to disguise her countenance. In less than eight days rest and a few baths restored her to her pristine beauty. The Viscountess then decorated her person with the most splendid and becoming dress;

dress; and seating her upon a couch, covered with a rich silk damask, she went to seek *Aucassin*.

Since meeting with the minstrel, he had passed his days and nights in incessant disquiet. The lady found him in tears, when she entered. "*Aucassin*," said she, "you seem to be oppressed by sorrow; I am come to dissipate your grief, and to shew you what will convert it into joy; follow me." He followed her full of anxiety and hope. The chamber door was opened, and presented to his delighted eyes the view of his enchanting *Nicolette*! He was so enraptured as to be incapable of motion. *Nicolette*, springing from the couch, ran to his embraces. A thousand tender endearments ensued. The summons of the night could not separate them, and the morning dawned on their mutual caresses. At length, when a reasonable opportunity arrived, *Aucassin* conducted his mistress to

the church, where he espoused her, and made her Countess of *Beaucaire*. Thus after so many crosses and misfortunes, they found reparation in a permanent union. They preserved inviolate their reciprocal attachment, and passed a long and happy life together.

* * In 1756, this story was published by Mr. *De Saint-Palaye*, under the title of *Les Amours du bon vieux tems*, with a few alterations, in verse. There prevails, indeed in this little Romance a spirit of gallantry, fidelity, and antient simplicity to justify the new title which the illustrious academician has given it.

Mademoiselle de Lubert, who has given a new edition of the *Lutins de Kernos*, has inserted this story, which she has converted into a Fairy Tale. The two lovers are called, *Etoilette* and *Ismir*. A Fairy the friend of *Etoilette*, delivers her from prison; and it is the same Fairy, that after all their dangers and misfortunes accomplishes their union.

Mr. *Sedaine* has founded on this Tale, a Comic Opera, which was performed in 1779 at *Versailles* and *Paris*.

THE WIFE OF ORLEANS.

FOUR scholars had come together to finish their studies at the university of *Orleans*. One of them conceived a violent inclination for a merchant's wife in the town, and he sought by every method to introduce himself to the lady. He at last accomplished his point, and was even so fortunate as to please her; but his assiduity and the repetition of his visits excited some degree of jealousy in the husband; who, to know whether there was any real ground for his suspicions, set a little niece, whom he had brought up in his family, to watch them.

The young girl was the better adapted to the task assigned her, on account of their having no mistrust of her. One day as the scholar pressed the dame to appoint a meeting, "I cannot for the present,"

sent," said the wife; "but have patience. It cannot be long before my husband sets out upon a journey. We shall then have opportunities enough to see one another; and they will be further facilitated by the convenience with which I shall be able to let you in, without being perceived, through the garden gate."

Unfortunately for them this conversation was overheard by the little spy, who went immediately with the intelligence to her uncle. He, on being acquainted with their design, resolved that very day to lay his plot for detecting the lovers; and pretending that he was obliged to go to some fair or other, gave notice to his wife, that he should set off the following day.

He accordingly took his departure; but at night returned to *Orleans*, and favoured by the darkness, went and took his post at the garden gate; not doubting
but

but the Scholar had received notice to repair to it. His conjecture was well founded. At the appointed hour the dame went to open the gate. There she met with her husband; and, in the persuasion that it was her lover, she embraced him and took him by the hand to conduct him to her chamber. The other, lest he should be discovered, followed in silence, concealing his face with the hood of his cloak.

But it were easier to deceive twenty Argufes than a single woman. Too much precaution in her man inspired the dame with mistrust. She stopped a little to examine him, and found it to be no other than her own husband. Then, with an extraordinary presence of mind, she said to him, as if she thought herself addressing the gallant: "How glad I am, my dear Sir, that you have observed punctually our appointment. Nevertheless, I cannot enjoy the pleasure of your company,

company, till all the family are gone to bed. But come along with me; I will in the mean time hide you somewhere; and, as soon as I am disengaged, will come and find you."

It sometimes happens that the ass has one thing in contemplation, and the driver another; and that is what the jealous husband experienced on the present occasion. He reckoned on catching his wife in a snare, but was himself caught in it. the cunning woman led him to a lower room, in which she shut him up; and returned to the garden gate, where she found the scholar; who, to say the truth, met with a better reception than the other.

After a few caresses, which it would be hard for two lovers, who had so long wished for a meeting to refrain from, the dame went down stairs to speak to her servants: "You have seen," said she,
"one

" one of the scholars come frequently to my house. It is I know not how long that I have been teased with his importunate courtship; and till this moment have I been puzzled, whatever means I have tried, to get rid of him. But at last my patience being entirely exhausted, I have, in order to cure him of his passion, appointed a sham rendezvous in the absence of my husband. He is now actually shut up in one of the lower chambers. Here is the key. Go and chastise him as he deserves; that he may never again be seized with an inclination to debauch women of character. If you perform your business well, I promise that you shall all have plenty of good wine to regale with on your return."

This roused the whole family. Every one in the house, footman, cook and chambermaid, the young niece herself, with two nephews of the merchant, spring up; and providing themselves with

with canes and whips, they rush into the lower chamber, and wrapping up the merchant's head in his hood, to prevent him from giving the alarm, they lay upon him without mercy. The unhappy wretch, after a severe beating, is driven out of the house and thrown upon a dung-hill. The wife in recompence, treated them all on their return with good wine of *Auvergnat*. She then went quietly to supper with her gallant.

As for the husband, this discipline had brought him into so deplorable a condition, that the next day it was necessary for him to be carried into the house. His wife as they brought him, ran, with terror in her looks, and asked him, what misfortune had befallen him. He told her, that he had been attacked on the road by robbers, and left half dead upon the spot. She prepared immediately a medicinal bath for his reception. With care and good advice, he soon got well.

Amidst

Amidst all his sufferings, he thought himself at least fortunate in having acquired, though at his own expence, a thorough confidence of his wife's virtues; and thence-forward preserved towards her not less esteem than love.

* * In the *Convivales Sermones*, a wife who had made an appointment with her lover, is surprized by the arrival of her husband. With a terrified air, she runs up to him, and tells him that the officers of justice had been in search of him, and had declared, that they would quickly return. Under the pretext of concealing him, she takes him to the pigeon house, and locks him up in it; then goes back to pass the night with her gallant.

In the *Faceticuses Journees*, a jealous husband hides himself in a hay-loft to watch his wife. She shuts him up in it, and then sends for her lover.

These two versions of the tale are to be found in several novellists, as *Poggi*, *Domenichi*, *Malef-pini*, *Bandello*. It is also in the *Cour de Bourgogne*, and has been treated by *Boccace* and *La Fontaine*.

THE PARSON'S LEGACY.

INSTEAD of the fables and fictions commonly retailed, hear the history of a Parson in the Vicarage of Antwerp.

His cure was tolerably good; and with a spirit of œconomy, that would not suffer him to squander away his substance, as many do, in luxurious or idle expences, it enabled him in time to amass a good fortune. But neither his prudence, nor his riches could avert the stroke of death. He became drop-fical; and having no hopes of recovery from the physicians whom he consulted, he made up his mind; allotted to pious and charitable purposes all that belonged to him, not overlooking the disposal of the most minute article of furniture in his house; and after he had settled all his affairs and quieted his conscience, he thought of nothing but dying in peace.

In

In this conjuncture, there came brother *Lewis*, and brother *Simon*, two Dominicans of *Antwerp*, who preached in the neighbourhood, and had been often entertained at the Parson's house. They reckoned, on this occasion, to find, as usual, good fare and comfortable lodging; but for once, they were disappointed; and were obliged to go farther for a dinner. Nevertheless, they made enquiry concerning the particular circumstances of the sick man's disorder; they felt his pulse, examined his arms, his legs, his body; and with a compassionate air, agreed that he was too far gone for hope; and that the evil had increased to such a pitch, that it would be impossible to stop the growth of it.

As they were going out, it occurred to their reflection, that the parson, having been a strict œconomist all his life, ought to have plenty of money in his coffers; and they formed a project for rid-

ding him of a part of it. " We want twenty livres for our library," said they to each other; " if we could get them out of this bloated divine, we should meet with a hearty welcome from the Prior of the Convent." This idea so forcibly impressed them, that they resolved to follow it up; and, in consequence, brother *Lewis*, as the most persuasive speaker of the two, undertook the office.

He returned then to the patient, and began with the insinuating language of devotion to discourse on death and repentance; he exhorted the sick man to think of the salvation of his soul, and to redeem his past offences by charitable donations. " That has already been my care," answered the dying man. Of all my worldly possessions, there is none that I have not given or bequeathed for the love of God; and every thing about me, to the very bed you see me lying on, has

has its allotment."—"What, Sir, have you given away all!" cried the monk in astonishment. "But know you not, that to please God, it is not enough to do acts of charity; but that we should, according to the expression in the scriptures, examine how we do them?"—"I could not easily err in that particular," replied the Parson. "This village has fed me to the present hour; and to it have I bequeathed my stock of grain, which may be worth ten livres. I have in it some needy relations, to whom I make the bequest of my flocks and my cattle. I have not forgotten the orphans nor the sick; I have left, besides, the *Beguines* * a legacy, and the *Cordeliers* an hundred pence."—"These disposals are indeed extremely meritorious," said the Jacobine;

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* The *Beguines* were a society of female devots, established in Flanders in the year 1226. They engaged in no vows; but wore a particular habit and worked for their subsistence. *Lewis IX.* gave them some establishments in France.

bine; * but it seems you have overlooked our brotherhood? a convent full of so many religious and holy persons, who fast incessantly, wear no linen, and every day offer up their prayers for you! Ah, brother, God will not have mercy on you."

The priest, somewhat astonished at this language, answered that he was very unfortunate in having been so precipitate; but that it was now, to his great regret, too late to repair his deficiency; that he had now nothing left to give; not a farthing, not a single grain. The two monks would not so easily give up their point;

* They are called *Jacobines*, as well *Dominicans* in the original. They took the former surname from their residence in the street of *Saint-Jacques* at Paris. Other contemporary poets represent them to have been actuated by the same principle of bigotry, in shutting the gates of Heaven indiscriminately against all, who did not make some gift or bequest to their order.

point; but returned to the attack. They proposed to have the will cancelled, and to have the disposal of some of the legacies altered, that they might come in for a share. If they might be believed, this was the most advisable bequest for one in his situation; and in suggesting it to him, they avowed, that they had less regard to the distress of their monastery, however pressing it might be, than to the tender solicitude they felt for the salvation of his soul.

This shameful and un-christian-like avidity raised the indignation of the parson. He resolved on punishing the two canting hypocrites, and before his death, to divert, at their expence, the townsmen of *Antwerp*. "My good brethren," said he, after appearing to have been for a few moments absorbed in reflection, "I confess that I have still remaining a precious jewel, of which I did not take notice; but

it is an article that I cannot possibly part with before I die: and desperate as my condition appears, I could not think of giving it up for an hundred marks in gold, if they were offered for it. I will, however, leave it to you, after I am gone; and thank God for having sent you here, while I am yet alive, to urge me to the accomplishment of so good a work. Let your Prior come to-morrow, and I will make him a formal assignment of it.

The monks, delighted at this promise, took their departure. On their arrival at the monastery, they had a chapter assembled, there gave a relation of the happy effects their zeal had operated; and required, to celebrate their good fortune, a feast that very night in the hall. This demand was seconded with great ardour, and unanimously assented to. The prior sent out for all kinds of delicacies. Instead of the wines in common consumption,

consumption, he ordered the very best and oldest the town could supply. They caroused and sang, and drank to their dropical benefactor, as well as to brother *Lewis*, who, puffed up with the success of his eloquence, made an effort to preserve an air of modest diffidence.

All this while the bells of the church were ringing in peals, as if the body of a saint had arrived. The neighbours, stunned with the noise, enquired what festival they were celebrating. In the midst, however, of their holy orgies, brother *Lewis*, in the true spirit of a consummate politician, whom neither glory nor pleasure can divert from the steady prosecution of his design, brought back the consideration of his brethren to the jewel, and recommended that the necessary provisions should be made for the next day's journey. For his own part, being eager to have the honour of accomplishing

completing the work himself, he was of opinion that it was needless for the Prior to give himself the trouble of going to the village ; and offered himself to return there with brothers *Giles, Nicholas, William, and Robert*. Full power was given him to settle this matter as he pleased. Mirth and wine united had rendered them so giddy, that whatever he had thought proper to recommend would have been honoured with the same implicit assent.

The following day, on the first dawn of the morning, the five associates set out, and never stopped till they arrived at the village ; so apprehensive were they of coming too late and finding the Parson dead. They saluted him devoutly in the Lord's name, and asked him if he did not find himself a little easier. " Alas ! my worthy brothers," he answered ; " my hour approaches ; nevertheless you are welcome : I have not forgot the promise

mise which I made yesterday to brother *Lewis*. Let one go to the town; it will be proper to bring the Mayor and the Sheriffs, that they may witness the grant, and thus prevent any one from contesting it with you.

This was a fresh sally of the parson's roguishness to give them the trouble of another march. The five monks all smoaking with perspiration, with their mouths open and tongues hanging out, looked like greyhounds that had been all day on the chace. Brother *Giles* and brother *Robert*, nevertheless, offered to return to *Antwerp*; and, notwithstanding their fatigue, set out again upon the expedition. At length, after a few hours had elapsed, they arrived with the magistrates.

The parson, after paying his respects to these officers, and desiring them to sit down, addressed them in the following words :

words : " I was yesterday, gentlemen, as you now behold me, lying on this painful couch, when brother *Lewis*, whom you see before you, came with one of his associates to take up his lodging in my house. Like a worthy preacher of God's word, he exhorted me to death and repentance; and, above all, to redeem my sins by a legacy to his convent. He represented to me, through zeal for my salvation, that if I did not bequeath them something, God would have no mercy on me; when I, on my part, like a true Christian, who is anxious for the future welfare of his soul, recollected that I had still left something very valuable, which I might present to them. I declare then, in your presence, gentlemen, that from this moment I bequeath it to them in full right to have and hold it after my decease."

The monks hardly knew what to think of this speech, half serious and half ironical.

nical. They pretended, however, not to understand the reproof, which the parson's sneer had conveyed; and brother *Lewis*, the orator of the embassy, pressed the dying man to declare at once to the Magistrates, what this valuable bequest was: "My good Sirs," said he, "it is my bladder, of which I desire them to make a purse to go about and receive their legacies in. My disorder must have made it large; it will hold a good deal; and I wish them success in filling it."

At these words, all who were present magistrates, attendants, and others, set up so loud and hearty a laugh, that the monks withdrew in confusion, cursing brother *Lewis* and his eloquence. What happened at their return to the monastery, I cannot say; but know that the affair was soon circulated through the town of *Antwerp*, and had such an effect, that for
a long

a long time no Jacobine could shew his face in it.

*** In the *Paragon of Novels*, a parson has a trick played on him similar to that imposed on the Monks in this tale. Our author tells us, that this piece of humour is erroneously attributed by *Fauchet* to *Jean de Meung*.

At these words, all who were present, migrated, murmured, and others, for up to find and Henry a laugh, that they would withdraw in confusion, coming before him and his chamber. What happened at their return to the monastery, but know that the affair was soon circulated through the town of Marseilles, and had such an effect, that for a long

THE CITIZEN OF ABBEVILLE.

A RICH trader of *Abbeville*, having got entangled in disputes and law-suits with a very powerful family, formed the resolution, in order to prevent his utter ruin, of emigrating from his native place, and settling with his wife and family at *Paris*. There he rendered homage to the king, and became his subject. The knowledge that he had acquired of business, of which he took the advantage to carry on a little traffic, afforded him the means of adding something to his property. He was much beloved in the neighbourhood for his civility and plain dealing. How easy is it, when one wishes it, to gain the good opinion of the world ! all that is requisite, is a sincere intention ; in general it does not cost a farthing.

Thus did our honest citizen pass seven years in his new residence, at the expiration of which, God was pleased to take away his wife. For thirty years they had been united, without ever having the least difference. The son for several days was so greatly afflicted at the loss, that his father was obliged to try all in his power to console the youth. "Your mother is gone," said he; "it is a misfortune that can not be remedied. Let us only pray God to have mercy on her: our tears will not restore her to us. For my own part, all I can expect, is very soon to go and join her. At my age we must not look far forward. It is in you, my son, that all my hopes centre. All my relations and friends are left behind me in *Pontbieu*; and I shall never expect to see any of them more. Strive to improve yourself, and to become an accomplished youth. If I can find a young lady, of good birth and character, whose family may furnish us with an agreeable society, I will

I will give her whatever portion may be demanded, and will end my old days with her and you.

Now in the same street with our citizen, and almost directly opposite, lived three brothers, knights and gentlemen, both by the father's and the mother's side, and all three esteemed for their valour. The eldest was a widower, and had a daughter. The whole family was poor: not that they were originally without fortune; but, in a moment of difficulty, having been obliged to have recourse to usurers,* their debt by the

R 2

rapid

* Usury was among the epidemic disorders of the age. It was chiefly exercised by the *Lombards*, who lent on pledges, at the rate of twenty per cent interest; the pledge, if not redeemed within six months, was forfeited. In England they had got such footing, that according to *Mathew Paris*, there was scarcely an individual who was not indebted to them, not even excepting the King.

They

rapid accumulation of interest, had amounted to three thousand livres, for which their property was either pledged or taken in execution; very little remaining with the father, besides the house in which he resided. This was so good, that he might easily have let it for twenty livres. He would rather have sold it, had it been in his power; but it had been his wife's property, and reverted to the daughter.

The citizen went to demand the girl in marriage of the three brothers. They, before

They were not indeed authorized by the laws; but well timed presents to Sovereigns and Magistrates generally placed these monied men above the coercion of them.

But the greatest extortioners in this way, were the *Jews*; of whom *Philip de Valois* having borrowed four hundred thousand livres, the interest in a few years accumulated to no less than two millions!

before they gave him their answer, desired to know what was his fortune. "In money and effects," said he, "I am worth fifteen hundred livres; all which I have honestly acquired. Half of it I will give immediately to my son; and the other half shall go to him after my death."

—"Honest friend," replied the brothers, "that will not do. You now promise, that you will leave your son half of your property after your decease; and you promise it in so ingenuous a manner, that we have no reason to doubt your sincerity. But between that and the present time, you may take it into your head to be made a Monk * or a Templar; and then all

R 3 must

* The veneration of the age for the monastic profession, caused many persons, even of princely rank; to be ambitious of terminating their lives in a convent. *Louis IX.* wanted to resign his crown for the cowl; and nothing but the spirit and address of his Queen could have induced him to renounce the project.

must go to the Convent; your grandchildren will not come in for a doit."

The three brothers then required that, before the contract was concluded, the citizen should make an entire grant of all his property; otherwise they would not agree to the marriage. The good man did not at first fully approve these conditions; but paternal affection getting the better at length of his scruples, he consented; and in the presence of some witnesses,* who were convoked on the occasion, he relinquished and renounced solemnly all his effects, not leaving himself wherewithal to purchase a dinner. Thus did he pave the way to his own misery, by throwing himself into an entire dependance on his children. Alas! if

* Another usage of those remote times, when very few being able to read, it was necessary to have oral evidence of the validity of bargains and contracts.

he had been aware of what awaited him, he would have been careful how he devoted himself to such wretchedness.

The young couple soon had a son; who, as he grew up, gave the most flattering testimonies of a great fund of good sense, and many amiable qualities. In the mean while, the old man lived, sometimes better and sometimes worse, at his son's house. He was just tolerated because he still gained something by his industry. But with years, his infirmities encreased; and, when he was no longer able to work, they found him an encumbrance. The wife especially, being of a proud, haughty disposition, could not bear him. Every day she threatened to leave the house, unless he was removed; and she became so importunate with her husband upon this head, that he, like an ungrateful monster, forgetting the debt of gratitude and of nature, went to intimate

mate to his unhappy father, that it was necessary for him to seek an asylum in some other place.

“ What is it you tell me, son ? ” cried the old man. “ What, have I given you the produce of sixty years labour, and established you in affluence, to be turned out of my own house ! Will you punish me then for the excess of my paternal love ? In the name of God, my dear son, I conjure you not to let me die of want. You know that I am unable to walk ; grant me at least some useless corner in your house. I ask neither for a bed, nor for the provisions of the table. A little straw thrown under a shed, with some bread and water will satisfy me. At my age life requires so little ! and, besides, with all my infirmities and cares, I cannot possibly be long a burthen to you. If you are disposed to give alms in expiation of your sins, let it be to your father ; can any charity be more praiseworthy ? recollect,

lect, my dear son, what bringing you up in the course of thirty years cost me; think of the blessings that God has promised to those that have regard to their parents here on earth; and dread his eternal anger, if you should venture to be yourself the murderer of your father."

This pathetic speech caused an emotion in the son; he nevertheless alledged the aversion and discontent of his wife; and, for the sake of family quiet, required the old man's departure. "Where would you have me go," replied the father? "will strangers receive me, when my own son turns me out of doors? Without money, without resource, I must then beg the bread necessary for subsistence." As he spoke, the old man's face was bathed with tears. He took, however, the stick that helped him to keep himself erect; and, rising, prayed God to forgive his son. But before he went out, he asked

asked a last favour. "The winter," said he, "is approaching; and if I am condemned to exist till then, I shall have nothing to defend me from the cold. My coat is in rags. In return for the many that I have been obliged to provide you with during your life, grant me one of yours. I require only one of the worst, one that you have entirely cast off." This slender boon was also denied him. The wife answered, that there was no coat in the house that would suit him. He then intreated that they would at least give him one of the horse's body-cloths; when the son finding that he could object no longer, made the young boy a signal to bring one.

This youth could not see, without being deeply affected, the distress of his grandfather. He was now ten years old, and was endowed, as was said before, with many amiable qualities. He went and took out of the stable the best of the housings,

sings, which he cut into two parts, and brought one of them to the old man. " All then are conspired to seek my death," said he sobbing. " I had obtained the promise of that poor solace, and yet I am envied the whole of it!" The son could not avoid reproving his boy for going beyond the directions he had received. " Pardon me, Sir," said the youth; " but I thought that you wanted to kill your father as soon as possible, and I wished to second your design. As for the other half of the horse-cloth, it shall not be lost: I intend keeping it to give it to you, when you are old."

So well contrived a rebuke had its effect on the ungrateful son. He perceived his fault; and asking pardon of his father, led him once more into the house, put him in possession of his former property, and thenceforward behaved towards him with the respect and regard due to his age and condition.

Remember

Remember this story, ye fathers, who have children to marry. Be wiser than this old man; and do not like him precipitate yourselves into a gulph, from which you may find it impossible to be extricated. Your children, no doubt, will have a regard for you; and you ought to be persuaded of it: but the surest method is not to trust to it. Whoever reduces himself to a dependence on others, exposes himself to a great deal of sorrow.

* * This tale is in the *Novelliero Italiano*, Vol. 3.

In the Fables of the *Abbé le Monier*, p. 68, the son puts his father in the hospital, and sends him occasionally some soup in a pewter pot. The old man dying, they want to part with the pot, but the child declares he will keep it, till the time, when he shall also put his father into the hospital. This harsh and disrespectful answer of the boy is offensive, because no good results from it; whereas in the Tale it is a sally of wit and sentiment, which pleases, because it prevents a wicked action,

In

In the *Histoires, Plaisantes, & Ingenieuses*, p. 146, the father, when he perceives that there is no longer any respect shewn for him, desires a coffer to be brought, in which he pretends there is a large sum of money, which he had till then reserved without discovering it. This makes an alteration in his children's conduct: but at his death they find nothing in the coffer but a bludgeon, with a label which destines it to be employed in breaking the head of any father, that is mad enough to lay himself at the mercy of his children.

This story has been verified by Mr. Imbert, and afforded the subject for a theatrical piece in 1540, called the *Mirror, or Example for ungrateful Children*.

THE THREE BEGGARS OF COMPIEGNE.

THREE blind Beggars were on their way from *Compiègne*, to seek alms in the neighbourhood. They kept the high road to *Senlis*, and walked at a great pace, each holding a cup and stick in his hand. A young ecclesiastic, well mounted, who was riding towards *Compiègne*, and attended by a valet on horseback, was struck at a distance with their steady and rapid strides. "Those queer fellows," said he, "for men, who appear blind, make very firm steps. I'll endeavour to find them out, and see if they are impostors.

Accordingly as he came near them, and as the beggars, hearing the tramping of the horses' feet, had ranged themselves in a line to ask for charity, he called to them, and pretending to give them some money, but in reality giving them

THAT

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nothing.

nothing, said: " There is a *besant*; it is intended for you all three; and you will divide it between you."—" Yes, your honour; and may God bless you in return for it." Although not one of them received the money, yet each was confident his comrade had got it. Thus, after many thanks and good wishes to the horseman, they resumed their march, full of spirits; but at the same time, slackening their pace.

The churchman feigned also to proceed on his journey: but at some distance he alighted, and delivering his horse to the care of the valet, directed him to wait his arrival at the gates of *Compiègne*; then gently approached the beggars, and followed them to watch the issue of the adventure.

When they no longer heard the noise of horses, the leader of the little band halted: " Comrades," said he, " we

have made a good day's work; and I think we had best return to *Compiègne*; and spend the money this good christian has given us. It is a long time since we have had a carousal; and now we have enough to enjoy ourselves completely: let us think of nothing but pleasure.

On their arrival in the town, they heard a cry of, *good wine, wine of Soissons, wine of Auxerre, fish and good fare, walk in gentlemen, pray walk in.** They would not go any farther, but entered the house; and after having cautioned the people not to judge of their means by their outward appearance, in the tone of men who derive confidence from the weight of their purse, they desired that they might be

* The inns having no signs, it was necessary to distinguish them some other way. A servant therefore was posted at the door, who, when he saw travellers pass, invited them in, as we see in this story. Some times those who had wine to sell, sent persons to cry it through the town.

be served quickly, and well. *Nicholas*,
 (for that was the name of the landlord)
 being used sometimes to see persons of
 their vocation spend more than such as
 appear to be in much more affluent cir-
 cumstances, received them respectfully.
 He shewed them into his best dining
 room; begged they would be seated and
 order what they liked best, assuring them,
 that there was nothing in *Compiègne* but
 what he could set before them, and in a
 style that would give them perfect satis-
 faction. They desired that plenty of
 good things might be got ready; and
 instantly master, waiter, maid; all in the
 house set about it. A neighbour was
 even sent for to assist. At length by vir-
 tue of several hands and good speed, they
 contrived to set upon table a good din-
 ner of five dishes: and immediately the
 beggars sat down to it, laughing, singing,
 drinking to each other, and diverting
 S 3 themselves

themselves with clumsy jokes on the simple traveller who was at the expence of the feast.

He had followed them with his valet, to the inn, and was within hearing of their merriment. He even resolvéd, that he might not lose any part of it, to dine and sup in a snug manner with the landlord. The beggars all this time occupied the best room, and were waited on like noblemen. Their mirth was thus prolonged till the night was pretty far advanced, when to make a suitable close to so jovial a day, they each called for a bed, and went to rest.

The next morning the landlord, who wanted to get rid of them, sent his servant to call them up. When they were come down stairs, he made out their bill, which amounted to ten pence. That was the moment the mischievous churchman so impatiently expected. To enjoy

joy the transaction more at his ease, he came and posted himself in a corner of the room, but without shewing himself, lest his presence might be a restraint on the guests. Master, said the blind men to the landlord, we have a besant; take your account and give us our change.* He holds out his hand to receive it, and as no one offers it to him, he asks which of the three is the paymaster. At first all are silent; he asks them again, when each says, "It is not I." The landlord then gets into a passion—"So, gentlemen vagrants, you think I am to serve here as a laughing-stock for your diversion. Be so good as to end all this mockery, and pay me immediately my ten pence, otherwise I'll give you all three a drubbing." They then began to enquire of each other for

* Our author cannot give us any certain information respecting the value of the *besant*. At one time it passed for seven pence, at another for nine; and again for ten; but here as they require change, its value must be supposed greater.

for the piece of money ; to suspect each other's honesty, to call names, to quarrel ; till at length such an uproar and confusion ensues, that the landlord, after giving each of them a box on the ear, calls to his servant to come down with two good sticks.*

The ecclesiastic all this while laughs in his hiding place, till he is ready to fall into convulsions. But when he found the affair was becoming serious, and heard them talk of sticks, he came forward and with an air of surprize asked the cause of the tumult.—“ Sire, here are three knaves, who came yesterday to consume my provisions ; and now that I ask them for my due, they have the insolence to mock me. But, by all that's sacred, they shall

* This first part of the Tale is attributed to the bouffon *Gounella*, and is recorded in the *Scelta di facezie*, in the *Arcadia di Brenta*, the *Historiettes ou Nouvelles en vers* by Mr. *Imbert*, the *Séries de Bouffon*, and in the *Contes du Sieur d'Ouille*.

shall not get off in that manner, and before they go out——“ Softly, softly, master *Nicholas*,” said the churchman; “these poor men perhaps have not wherewithal to pay you; and in that case they demand rather your pity than your resentment. How much does their bill amount to?”—“ Ten pence.”—“ What! is it for so poor a sum that you raise all this disturbance? Come, make yourselves easy; I will take it upon myself. And, for my part, what am I to pay you?”—“ Five pence, Sir.”—“ That’s enough. I shall pay you fifteen pence; now let these unfortunate men go, and know that to afflict the poor is a sin of the first magnitude.”

The blind men who were terrified at the apprehension of the bastinado, made their escape with all possible haste; while *Nicholas*, who had reckoned on losing his ten pence, being delighted to find one to pay it, launched out into the most
flattering

flattering encomiums on the churchman. "What a good man," cried he! "That is the kind of priests we should have; and then they would be respected. But unfortunately, there are but few like him. Be assured, Sir, so handsome an action will not go unrewarded. You will prosper in the world; take my word for it; and will find the good effects of your generosity."

—All that the crafty traveller had been saying to his host, was but a fresh piece of roguery on his part; for in luring the inn-keeper with such ostentation of generosity, he only meant to trick him as he had already done the beggars.

Just at that moment the parish bell was ringing to prayers. He asked who was to perform the service; they told him, it was their parson. "As he is your pastor, Master *Nicholas*," he further said, "you are most probably acquaint-
ed

ed with him?"—"Yes, Sir."—"And if he would engage to pay the fifteen pence that I owe you, would not you acknowledge us quits?"—"Undoubtedly, Sir, if it were thirty and you desired it."—"Well then come along with me to the church, and we will speak to him." They went out together; but first the ecclesiastic directed his valet to saddle the horses, and to keep them in readiness.

The priest, as they entered the church, had just put on his sacerdotal habit, and was going to read prayers. "This will keep us very long," said the traveller to his host; "I have not time to wait, but must proceed immediately upon my journey. It will satisfy you, I should imagine, to have the parson's word for the money?" *Nicholas* having nodded assent, the other went up to the parson, and dextrously slipping into his hand twelve deniers, said: "Sir, you will pardon my coming so near the pulpit to speak

I speak to you ; but much ceremony need not be observed between persons of the same condition. I am travelling through your town, and lodged last night at one of your parishioner's, whom in all probability you know, and whom you may now see hard by. He is a well-meaning man, honest, and entirely exempt from vice ; but unfortunately his head is not so sound as his heart ; his brain is somewhat cracked : last night a fit of his madness prevented us all from sleeping. He is a good deal better, thank God, this morning ; nevertheless, as his head is still affected, and full of religion, he begged we would conduct him to church, and that he might hear you say a gospel ; that the Lord may in his goodness restore him to perfect health."—
 " Most chearfully," answered the parson. He then turned to his parishioner and said to him : " Friend, wait till I have done prayers, when I'll take care that you shall have what you desire." *Nicholas,*
who

who thought this an ample assurance of what he went for, made no more ado; but attended the churchman back to his inn, wished him a good journey; and then returned to the church to receive his payment from the parson.

The latter as soon as he had performed the service, came with his stole and book towards the inn-keeper: "Friend," said he, "go down upon your knees." The other, surprised at this preamble, observed, that there was no occasion for such ceremony in receiving fifteen pence. "Truly, they are not mistaken," said the parson to himself; "this man can not be in his right senses." Then assuming a tone of soft insinuation, "Come, my good friend," said he, "place your trust in God; he will have pity on your condition." At the same time he puts the bible on the other's head and begins his gospel. *Nicholas* in anger pushes away the book; declares that he can

not stay to be trifled with, guests being waiting for him at his house ; that he wants his fifteen pence, and has no occasion for prayers. The priest irritated at this, calls to his congregation, as they were going out of church, and desires them to seize the man, who was raving. " No, no ! I am not mad ; and by St. Corneille, you shall not trick me in this manner : you engaged to pay me, and I will not leave this place, till I get my money."—"Seize him, seize him," cried the priest. They accordingly fastened on the poor devil ; one taking hold of his arms, another of his legs, a third clasping him by the middle, while a fourth exhorted him to be composed. He makes violent efforts to get out of their clutches, swears and foams with rage like one possessed ; but all in vain : for the parson puts the stole round his neck, and reads quickly his gospel from beginning to end, without excusing him a single word. After which, he sprinkles him

him copiously with holy-water, bestows on him a few benedictions and then lets him loose.

The unlucky wight saw clearly that he had been made a dupe. He went home, overwhelmed with shame and vexation; and with the loss of his fifteen pence; but then he had in lieu of them gotten a gospel and benedictions.

* * * This last incident in the Tale has been copied over and over again. *Arlotto*, in the *Facetieuses Journees*, makes a troublesome creditor meet with similar treatment, he being sent to an Abbey for payment of the debt he demands.

Villou, in his *Repues Franches*, plays the same trick on a fishmonger, of whom a person has bought a basket of fish. He is taken to the confessor to be paid, when the same incidents occur as in our story.

It is much the same in the *Facetie di Poncino*. In the *Arcedia di Brenta*, it is a butcher who is

ensnared. In the *Nouveaux Contes à rire*, it is a cook, and the same in the *Contes du Sieur D'Ouille*. In the *Courier Facetieux*, it is a country trader, of whom a rogue buys a piece of linen.

In the *Histoire générale des Larrons*, the rogue buys some linen, and taking the shop-keeper with him, leaves him in the care of a surgeon, under pretext of receiving payment, the surgeon having been previously informed that he was out of his mind. This story might have furnished *Moliere* with the idea of *Pourceaugnac*, delivered as a madman to the physicians, if it be not rather conjectured that he derived it from *Plautus*, in whose works there is something like it.

In the *Bibliothèque de Cour*, a woman buys the stuff; and takes the shop-boy to *St. Lazare*, where she leaves him as one of her children, whose misconduct requires correction.

THE CORDELIER'S BREECHES.

A DAME, in the city of *Orleans*, had an ecclesiastic for her gallant. Whenever a woman undertakes to amuse herself in that manner, she should have a great deal of art and address; she should know how to tell a falsehood with a good grace; should have an imagination fertile in expedients; and, above all, she should have such command of herself, as never to be disconcerted. Now, such was to an exquisite degree the dame we are speaking of; never was there a more cunning baggage. Her husband, on the other hand, *Michael* by name, and a trader by profession, was of a very different character, being a plain, downright sort of man.

His business calling him frequently to the neighbouring fairs and markets, he

had occasion to go to that of *Meun*. A cousin of his, named *William*, had likewise some affairs that required his attendance there, and they agreed to travel together. The husband had promised to take him in his road ; and going early to bed, he desired his wife would give him a call at break of day. She, not a little pleased, as you may think, at the prospect of his departure, resolved to take the advantage of his absence from home, and was in great haste to rid herself of him. Scarcely had he got into his first dream, when she roused him suddenly : " Make haste, Sir, and get up ; you have over-slept yourself, and will never get in time to the end of your journey." The good man, though he would fain have lain a little longer, and found that he wanted a few hours of his usual rest, nevertheless, arose immediately and set out.

It

It is quite needless to inform you that the churchman had notice of his departure, and you may rest assured he was upon the watch, to succeed the husband. As soon as the appointed signal was given, he slipped privately into the house; and in an instant received more caresses than poor *Michael* had the luck to get in the whole course of his marriage

. Meanwhile the husband had arrived at his cousin's door. He knocked again and again to awake his intended fellow-traveller, cried out to him by name, and cursed him heartily within himself for making him wait in that manner. "Why, surely you are mad," said his cousin from the window, "to begin your journey at such an hour. What, are you dreaming, friend? it is not yet midnight."—"Not midnight," said the other! "and my wife told me it was so late, that we should not be able to arrive in time."—Your wife was making sport

sport of you, cousin, believe me; go to bed again, and repose yourself quietly for a few hours longer."

Michael then returned home, and called to have the door opened to him. "Heavens! It is my husband," cried the dame; "get out quickly and hide yourself in some corner. I will afterwards contrive your escape." The gallant, in haste, bundled up his cloaths, and took refuge in an adjoining chamber; but in the dark did not perceive that he left his breeches behind him. The husband was all impatience at the door, and kept knocking with his whole force: the maid servant at last awakened at the noise, and went to open the door.

The wife, on his coming in, pretended to be fast asleep, and he, unwilling to disturb her, undressed himself quietly and lay down. She then pretended to awake in a dreadful fright, and jumping
out

out of bed, began crying out for help, like a mad woman. In vain did the husband endeavour to pacify her, assuring her that it was only he. "Who are you," said she, "I know none here but my husband; and he is at present on the road. You are a villain, and have wicked designs against me. Know that I am a modest woman, and if you do not leave me instantly, I shall alarm all the neighbours." *Michael*, on hearing this, was transported with joy. "Yes," said he, "with triumphant satisfaction; yes, I see clearly you are a woman of virtue; and the more I know you, the stronger is my affection. But my good wife, you roused me rather too soon; it is not yet midnight; and I am come back to take my rest a little longer."

She answered with an engaging softness: "Ah, Sir, pardon my wildness. I ought to have known your voice, as no other man's is familiar to me; but I did not expect

expect you ; and I was really so alarmed to find one by my side - - - ; on which she approached to embrace him. It is impossible to describe the fondness of the simple husband, or to give an account of their caresses. He at length, however, fell asleep, and continued so till the morning rounds * announced the day ; when he awoke and got up to take his departure. But obliged to feel for his cloaths, he made a curious mistake ; for he took the monk's breeches, without perceiving it, and went away.

The other, who by his departure found himself at liberty to withdraw, and feared

* The almost continual state of war caused the inhabitants of towns to place in their belfries, or on their watch towers, a sentinel, who was charged to go *the rounds*, and to give the alarm on the appearance of an enemy. Another of his duties, was to give notice, by sounding a horn, of the break of day and sun set. They are often mentioned in these Tales ; and are in existence at this hour in some towns of France.

feared, if he should stay longer to be perceived in his retreat by his neighbours, came to take leave of the dame ; and after a tender farewell, searched about for his breeches. " What is this I see," cried he ? " all is lost ; we are discovered : for here are your husband's breeches." The wife at this intelligence, was at first in great consternation ; but a moment's reflection restored her to herself ; and she assured her lover that he might make his mind easy respecting the event. She only desired him to give her what he had at his girdle,* then fetched him other breeches, embraced him affectionately, and sent him away.

Soon

* We should say what he had *in his fob*. The breeches had, at that time, no pocket ; and sometimes the girdle or waistband was not of a piece with them, but passed through holes made for the purpose. Besides this waistband, both sexes, who wore alike long habits, had another over the robe, to which they hung their purse, their keys, their

Soon after she repaired to the monastery of the *Franciscans*, and with an appearance of candour and ingenuous modesty, that might have imposed on the most knowing, told the Monk, who had charge of the gate, that, having been some years married, and notwithstanding her ardent wishes not having hitherto had children, she had been assured that by a peculiar gift of heaven, the breeches of their holy order were endowed with the virtue of rendering her pregnant, if a pair of them were placed only for a single night at the head of her bed; she had in consequence come to beg the Monk, that either he or one of the
worthy

their knife, and a lawyer his ink stand. This was a curious article of dress among the women. They had it made of silk, of gold and silver thread, &c. which gave rise to the proverb: "A good woman is better than a girdle of gold." Nevertheless, it appears by this tale, that some carried in the waistband of their breeches, as in a fob, what was generally attached to the exterior girdle.

worthy brethren, would for charity sake lend her a pair. This request, in spite of the serious air with which she made it, appeared so ludicrous to the ecclesiastic, that he imagined she was laughing at him. However, on the application of a small sum of money, he suffered himself to be persuaded, and went for a pair of his own breeches.

Meanwhile *Michael* was at *Meun*, and was busily employed there in driving his bargains. The market being over, he went to dine in company with other traders and merchants of his acquaintance; but the misfortune was, that when the accounts were to be settled, and *Michael* sought his purse for that purpose, he could discover nothing at his girdle, but an ink-horn; in which he found a pen-knife, a quill, and a piece of parchment. He fell, on this discovery, into an ungovernable fury. An hundred times

over did he call his wife an abandoned strumpet ; and returned in haste to Orleans to have his revenge.

As he entered his house with eyes full of fury, " So," said he, " my very scrupulous and chaste wife, you are not at a loss to know the reason of my returning so quickly !" She did not appear at all terrified at this address, but answered with a smile : " O, I suspect what it is : but since you have made so curious a blunder as to take them with you to *Meun*, I beg you will take the trouble of carrying them to the *Cordeliers*. Then she recounted to him the story she had fabricated, her extreme desire to have a child, and the cause of her veneration for the breeches of the order of St. Francis ; in short all that she had before said to the Monk at the convent.

Michael's first idea was to place no reliance on this improbable apology, framed evidently

evidently for the purpose. He thought it would be a master-stroke of policy to detect the whole story, by going instantly to the convent, and enquiring into the fact. It is easy to conceive what happened. The monk, who was first deceived, acknowledged that a woman of creditable appearance, dressed in such and such manner, with much seeming devotion towards St. Francis and his holy order, had come with faith to require a pair of breeches from one of the fathers, and that he, unworthy as he was, had lent her a pair of his. "Ah, brother, cried the husband, "how signal a service have you rendered me! But for you it had been all over with my wife; I should have killed her."

He returned home then full of raptures, made a thousand apologies to his wife for the suspicions he had rashly conceived, and promised by his attention and good treatment to make her forget

his unjust anger. Possessed at length of the entire confidence of her husband, she enjoyed for a long time the liberty it procured her. She went and came; visited abroad or saw at home whomsoever she thought proper; whilst the outwitted husband never imagined, that he had any reason to complain of her conduct.

* * This Tale is in the Novels of *Sarchetti*, in those of *Sabadino*, and in the Instruction of the *Chevalier de la Tour* to his daughters.

In the *Apologie pour Herodote*, there is the story of a Cordelier, who in like-manner left behind him his breeches, which the wife made her husband believe to be reliques.

The *Nouveaux contes à rire* give an account of a man, who not only gets away his breeches, which he had forgotten, but even makes the husband kiss them.

In *Masuccio*, the Monk comes to take them in solemn proceßion. In *Greecourt*, the husband, on taking the Monk's breeches, finds a sum of money
in

in them, which the wife had given him as an inducement to visit her. In *Vergier*, the gallant is a rich Englishman, who has likewise a good deal of money in his pocket; and that serves as a consolation to the husband.

In *Apulee*, a husband obliged to set out upon a journey, enjoins his slave *Myrmex* to watch, during his absence, the conduct of his wife. Young *Philethifere* gains over the slave with a bribe, and obtains an appointment with the lady. Whilst they are in bed together, the husband arrives. The lover in haste snatches up his cloaths and runs off; but leaves his sandals behind him. The husband, finding them, judges himself betrayed and dishonoured; and suspecting the slave to be an accomplice, he takes him bound towards the market-place. *Philethifere* meets them on the road; and immediately stops the slave, accusing him of having stolen his sandals the day before at the public baths; and by this cunning artifice he calms the indignation of the husband, who returns home fully persuaded of his wife's innocence. This perhaps served as the groundwork of our Tale.

THE PHYSICIAN OF BRAI.

IN former times a labouring man, by means of parsimony and hard work, had contrived to scrape together a small property. Besides plenty of corn and wine, with some well hoarded silver, he had in his stable four horses, and eight oxen. Notwithstanding this comfortable provision, he had not turned his thoughts to matrimony. His friends and neighbours often upbraided him on that head. But his excuse was, that if he could fall in with a woman to his liking, he would add a wife to the appendages of his household ; but that till then he should beg to decline it. They on their part, engaged to bring him the very best that could be found ; and accordingly they set on foot their enquiries.

At some distance lived an old knight,
extremely poor, who was now become a
widower,

widower, and had a well educated and handsome daughter. The damsel was ripe for marriage; but as the father could give her nothing, she was in danger of losing her market. At length the friends of our country boor, having demanded her in his name, the father readily assented; and the daughter, who had prudence, and durst not offend her fire, found herself, though with reluctance, under the necessity of complying. The clown, flattered with the alliance, had the contract immediately concluded, and the marriage celebrated as hastily as could be.

But it was no sooner accomplished, than disagreeable and vexatious reflections took possession of his mind; when he considered how unfit a knight's daughter was for one of his profession. Whilst he should be out of doors, attending his affairs either with the cart, the plow, or any other labour, what was to become

become of his wife, whose education had not enabled her to set about any useful work, and whose condition would oblige her to stay at home? The parson, with whom every day is Sunday, will not fail, thought he, being assiduous in his attendance, to prevent her feeling the inconvenience of solitude: he will come one day, and return again the next; and then good bye to the husband's honour. "What is to be thought of then, since the marriage cannot be undone. Suppose," said he to himself, "I were to beat her before I went out in the morning, she would then cry all day; and, while occupied in that manner, she certainly would not be inclined to listen or give encouragement to gallants. On my return at night, we shall be quits on my asking pardon; and I surely know the right method to obtain it."

His mind fully engaged with this fine plan, he asked for his dinner. After the repast,

repast, he went up to the lady, and with his hard, clumsy fist, gave her so smart a blow upon the the cheek, that the impression of his four fingers was left upon it. But that was not all. As if she had made some egregious failure in her duty, he repeated his blow several times, and then went out into the fields. The unfortunate wife began to weep and to give herself up to affliction. "Why would my father make me a sacrifice to this savage? Were we then in want of bread? and why was I short-sighted enough to consent to the marriage? Alas! if my poor mother had been alive, I should not have been doomed to this wretchedness. What will become of me?" She was so distracted, that she would not admit of consolation from any; and, as the husband had anticipated, passed the whole day in tears.

When he came in at night, his first care was to endeavour to appease her. It was
the

the devil, he said, that tempted him. He vowed never again to lay hands upon her, threw himself at her feet, and with such appearance of contrition craved pardon, that the wife promised to forget all. They accordingly made their peace, and supped together in a friendly manner. But the boor, seeing how well his stratagem had succeeded, resolved on a repetition of it. The next morning then at rising, he found pretence to quarrel again with his wife, struck her and went out, as he had done the day before. She thought herself now for a certainty condemned to suffer without resource, and gave herself up to her sorrows.

Whilst she was thus indulging her affliction, two King's Messengers came to the door, mounted on white horses. They saluted her in the name of the monarch; and asked her for some refresh-

refreshment,* as they were ready to expire with hunger. She immediately prepared for them what she had in the house, and asked whither they were going equipped in that manner. " We do not exactly know," said they; " but are in quest of some able physician; and will cross over to England, if we cannot otherwise find one. The King's daughter is in great danger. About eight days ago, as she was eating fish, a bone stuck in her throat. All the attempts that have been since

* The Kings of France, when they travelled, took up their residence for the time they halted, at the house of a vassal, if they had not a castle or farm of their own in the neighbourhood, thinking it beneath their dignity to lodge in a public hotel. This was called the *droit de gîte*. Convents and other religious establishments were subject to it. And this privilege was conveyed by the Prince to his Messengers or Delegates, who could exact it on the road, in the same manner with the King himself. The white horses announced these people in the Tale to be servants of the King.

since made to relieve her, and extricate the bone, have been ineffectual. She can neither sleep, nor eat; and suffers the most intolerable anguish. His Majesty, who is wonderfully afflicted on the occasion, dispatched us to bring some one that is able to cure his daughter. If he should lose her, he will die with grief."—"Go no further," answered the lady: "I have a man for your purpose; an extraordinary physician, whose skill exceeds that of *Hippocrates*."—"O heavens! is it possible? or do you mean only to amuse us?"—"No; I tell you the real truth. But the physician I am speaking of has a peculiar whim of his own; he is so perverse that he will not exert his talent, until he is soundly beaten."—"Oh! if that be all, we'll take care that he do not want a handsome drubbing. He is in good hands. Only let us know where he resides."

The

The wife then directed them to the field, in which her husband was at work, and cautioned them particularly not to forget what she had told them respecting his strange perverseness, and the method of curing it. They thanked her, and each providing himself with a stick, spurred their horses up towards the countryman ; whom they addressed in the King's name, desiring him to follow them.

" For what purpose," he enquired.—" To cure his daughter. We have been informed of your skill in physic, and are come to order you to come in his name."

The clown replied, that he was a tolerably good labourer, and that if his Majesty wanted any thing done in that way, he should be happy to offer him his service ; but as for medicine, he protested that he knew nothing of it. " I see plainly," said one of the horsemen to his companion, " that he wants a beating, and that civil words will have no effect with him." They instantly then dismounted

from their horses, and belaboured him in such a manner, as if they strove which should do it better than the other. At first he was going to remonstrate against the injustice of their treatment; but he found reasoning would not do against the argument of superior force; so that he was constrained to submit, and to promise an implicit obedience to whatever they might require. They ordered him then to get upon one of the mares that drew his cart, and thus conducted him to the King.

The monarch was in the greatest uneasiness on account of his daughter's condition. The return of the two messenger's restored in some degree his hopes; and they were instantly ordered in, to acquaint him with the success of their researches. These men, after an extravagant encomium on the wonderful and whimsical man, whom they had brought with them, informed the King of all the particulars

Particulars of their adventure. "I never," said the prince, "heard of so extraordinary a physician: but if it is his humour, and he likes a beating; if nothing else will induce him to cure my daughter, e'en let it be so."

He immediately ordered down the Princess, and desiring the countryman to approach, told him, there was the patient whom he was to cure. The poor devil fell upon his knees, crying out for mercy and swearing by all the saints in heaven, that he knew nothing, *not a single word of physic*. All the answer the monarch made, was a signal to two robust serjeants, who attended there in readiness. These men, with good sticks, poured upon his shoulders such a heavy shower of blows, that he soon cried out, "Mercy, mercy! I will cure her." *

* There is likewise in the *Belphegor* of Machiavel and *La Fontaine*, a countryman, sent for by the King to cure his Daughter; who is tormented by

The young princess was brought before him, pale and almost expiring; she opened her mouth and with her finger pointed out the seat and cause of her anguish. He considered within himself how it were possible to effect the cure; for he saw clearly that there was no retracting, and that he had only the choice of the alternative, either to accomplish the remedy, or submit to be beaten to death. "The evil extends no farther than the throat, said he to himself; now if I could but contrive to make her laugh, perhaps she would throw out the splinter." This struck him as a feasible expedient: he requested therefore of the King that a large fire might be made in the audience chamber, and that the princess and he might be left alone together for a few minutes.

This
 an evil spirit. He is threatened with the gallows, unless he saves the princess; and, like the clown in this tale, escapes only by an artifice.

This done agreeable to his wishes, and none in the room besides the princess and himself, he throws off his cloaths and lies down before the fire ; then with his long sharp nails begins to scratch and curry his hide, making at the same time such contortions and grimaces, that the princess, in spite of all her pain, could not contain herself ; but at once broke out into a burst of laughter. The sudden efforts of nature threw out the bone. The countryman took it up, and ran to the door, crying out to the King, " here it is, Sire, here it is ! " — " You restore my life," said the overjoyed monarch ; and in recompence promised him some cloaths and robes.* The countryman

* An usual custom of the Kings and Sovereign Princes was to make presents, especially at Easter and Christmas, of robes, mantles and other cloaths, to those in their service, and to the Lords in high offices at court. These were called *livrees*, from *livrer*, (to deliver or distribute) a name still attached to those habits which are given to servants. It was in one of these distributions, that *St. Louis*,

tryman thanked him; but required nothing except permission to go home, where

by a kind of holy fraud, engaged several Lords without their knowledge, in the crusade along with him. The *liveries* were given to them in the dark. When the light appeared, they found that each had a cross sewed upon his shoulder; and they thought the engagement as obligatory as if it had been voluntarily taken. The historians tells us, that *Edward III.* having at his court in the Christmas holidays, some French gentlemen, whom he had made prisoners at the unsuccessful attack on Calais, to shew his courtesy and esteem for their valour, caused them to be comprehended in the number of persons, to whom his liveries were distributed.

Sometimes the accepting of this livery was the contract of an engagement to serve the sovereign who furnished it, for a year. Thus when the King, in this tale, promises robes to the physician, he declares that he considers him from that instant as engaged in his service, or that he wishes him to engage in it. We must not confound these liveries made at stated times, with the accidental presents of cloth made occasionally by Lords and great men

where his family affairs called for his return. In vain did the King offer him his royal protection, and the appointment of his physician; he persisted in the refusal, and urged, that it was absolutely necessary for him to return home; for when he came away there was no bread in the house, and corn was wanted at the mill.

But when on a signal made by the King, the two serjeants re-commenced the discipline they had before inflicted: when he felt the blows, he implored mercy and forbearance, and promised to continue there all his life, if they required it. He was then conducted into an adjoining chamber, where after they had stripped off his rustic habit, and shaved and shorn him, he was dressed in a rich scarlet robe.

men to Minstrels and Fabulists. These were generally his own cloths which the Lord gave as a reward, and commonly those which he wore the very day on which he made the present.

robe. During all this, he thought of nothing but the means of making his escape; and he reckoned, that it being difficult for them always to keep eyes upon him, he should soon find an opportunity.

In the mean time, the extraordinary cure he had operated was reported abroad; and at the news more than eighty diseased persons, in hopes of the same relief, had flocked to the palace, and entreated the good offices of the Sovereign with his physician in their favour. The King sending for him, said: "Friend, I commend these poor people to your care; cure them immediately, that I may send them to their several homes."—"Sire," answered the countryman, "unless God will take them in hand along with me, it is impossible; they are too numerous."—"Let the serjeants be sent for," exclaimed the prince. At the sight of these executioners, the unfortunate boor again

again apologized, and promised to cure all in the palace, down to the very scullions.

He requested then that the King and all his attendants, who were in good health, would leave him in the audience chamber with his patients. When the monarch and his suite had retired, he ranged the sick people all round the hearth, where he had made a rousing fire, and addressed them thus: " My friends, it is no trifling job to restore health to so many afflicted persons, and above all so expeditiously as you require it. I know only of one method; it is to single out the patient, that is in the worst condition, to throw him into the fire, and then to make up his ashes into powders, to be swallowed by the rest. The remedy is a rough one, I allow; but it is certain, and I will answer with my life for its efficacy." At these words of the physician, they looked round at each other, as if to examine their

their respective conditions; but in the whole company there was not one, whether hectic, or dropfical, that for the world would acknowledge his complaint dangerous.

The doctor then addressed himself to the nearest in the circle; "you appear to me very pale and languid; I imagine you are in the worst way."—"Who, I, Sir?" answered the other, "not at all; I feel myself at this moment greatly relieved, and indeed was never better in the course of my life."—"How's this, impostor! you are in good health! Then what business had you here?" When instantly the patient flies to the door and makes his escape. The King was without waiting the issue, and resolved to have the Doctor once more cudgelled, unless he acquitted himself well without it. Seeing a sick man come out, "are you cured," said he?—"Yes, Sire."—A moment after another appears;—"and you?"—"And I also."

I also."—In short, there was not one person, whether young or old, married or single, that would agree to be made into powders; so that all went out, pretending they were cured.

The King, charmed with his skill came in to congratulate the Doctor; and declared himself lost in wonder at the miracle that had been worked in so short a time. "Sire," answered the countryman, "I am possessed of a secret charm of unparalleled virtues, by means of which I effect my cures." The monarch loaded him with presents; gave him silver and horses; assured him of his friendship, and permitted him to return home to his wife; but on condition, that in case his advice was wanted, he should return without obliging them to cudgel him. The boor then took leave of the King. When he got home he had no further occasion to labour, never thought again of beating his

his wife ; but loved her, and was beloved by her. Thus, in dubbing him physician, she made his fortune without intending it.

* * It is almost unnecessary to remark, that from this story, *Moliere* has taken his *Medecin Malgre lui*. The first part, on which *Moliere's* fable is founded, is also to be seen in the *Enfant sans souci*, and in the *Serees de Bouchet*.

The second part has also been copied, as well as the first. We read in the *Poggiana*, that the Cardinal de Bar, a Neapolitan, having at Verceil an hospital, from which he drew very little profit, because there were so many patients ; his intendant to get rid of those importunate persons, who consumed his master's revenue, took it into his head to disguise himself as a physician, and declared to them that they could not be cured without an ointment made of human fat. When he accordingly proposed they should eat pots, which was to be put into the kettle, they all left the hospital.—This part is likewise to be found in the *Courier Facetieux*, in the *Histoires plaisantes & Recreatives*, the *Gibeciere de Mome*, and in the *Sereede Bouchet*.

F I N I S.



The Grey Palfrey

The ~~Pastor~~ ~~the~~ rove

The Brother of Aberville

The Parsons' Cow

Anberca

Bear ~~the~~

The Woman

Constant in Hand

The Lament ~~the~~

The Knight of ~~the~~

Ancassin a ~~the~~

The Wife of ~~the~~

The Parson's Wife

The ~~the~~

The ~~the~~

The ~~the~~

The ~~the~~

is found, it is also to be found
and in the *Secret de Saint*

